■ Sports
Red Sox complete record comeback versus Yankees

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CIA oversaw abuse at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison, court told

■ News / A2
AFP says plot to bomb US Embassy foiled

■ Across / A17
Witness positive culprit suspect Yangco killer

■ Lifestyle
Wrapping Danes, Swedes in banana fiber

Back to basics menu for the hungry

By Nob Custodio

WHAT'S on the menu for the hungry?

For Nestor," said Socialization Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman as she announced yesterday the priorities in the

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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THE SHADOW of a smile during the House hearing on Thursday seems to lighten up the severely serious face of Gen. Carlos F. Garcia during his previous appearances.

Palace forms new Cabinet 'superbody'

GMA's Office of External Affairs now in operation

By Julier Luberg Javellana

THERE'S a new "superbody" in the Palace, a creation of President Macapagal-Arroyo which smooth out her avowed "reengineering" or downsizing policy in government.

The newly-created Office of External Affairs, overarching to Malacañang insiders is emerging as a "superbody" appears to duplicate the work of regular line departments.

The powers said the OEA was given nothing for an initial budget of P100 million.

It is eventually become a 100-strong office nationwide, the OEA sees has its own "political attaché" in the United States — Rosario Ilusorio Isidro and Angeles City councilor Alex Categorico — to tap Filipino entrepreneurs and organizers.

Pat Gustelo of Migrante will head the OEA's going on overseas Filipino workers.

Presidential adviser for External Affairs Eduardo Hermosa, who holds Cabinet rank, denied that his office was a newly created redundancy.

"Our task will be more on harnessing, developing and consolidating the capabilities of non-government organizations and other groups operating outside the government," Hermosa said in a phone interview with the Inquirer.

He said his office would link the government to hundreds of "constituency" groups around the country from farmers, organized traders, public transport groups, religious sectors, indigenous communities, labor groups, to entrepreneurial groups.

OEA Undersecretary Jimmy Concepcion, who will head the Asia-Pacific desk, said the office has not received its organizational structure yet.

THIS COCK-BREEDING farm on Chong Bulang Street, Barangay Sto. Niño, Moonwalk Subdivision, Parañaque, is owned by Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes. Above: Thieves are housed in the half-hectare property Reyes declared in Parañaque property in his SAL but not the cock farm itself.

Reyes owns cock farm in Parañaque

By Ric Zamora

AT THE end of a barangay tanod of Sto. Niño in Moonwalk Subdivision, Parañaque is concealed, the cock farm is "owned by Gen. and Reyes."

"Nun lalong sa the media! We should have reported this a long time ago," the watchman-sworn chided the reporter in Filipino.

Tricycle drivers and neighborhood hams were quick to direct the reporter to the "cock-breeding farm of General Reyes."

The property referred to is a cock farm in Moonwalk Subdivision, also (Phase 2) said the person to be Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, former armed Forces chief of staff and defense secretary.

The 5,000-square-meter cock farm, located on Bulang Bulang Street in Barangay Sto. Niño, is enclosed by a high concrete and steel fence.

REYES, A-2

PMA alumni condemn graft in military

THE ALUMNI association of the Philippine Military Academy yesterday expressed concern over allegations of graft and corruption against senior officers of the military who were graduates of the academy.

In a statement, the PMA Alumni Association Inc. said it was condemning in the strongest terms "any act of graft and corruption in government because we believe that public office is a public trust."

The statement came several days after a text message describing the PMA as the "Philippine Millionaires Academy" was circulated. Another text message read: "What's the best business school in the country? PMA—because it produces millionaires."

A PMA Alumnus (Class 1971), Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia, is accused of amassing ill-gotten wealth. He is being investigated by the Office of the Ombudsman and will face a court martial.

Some quarters have warned that the scandal could trigger another destabilization plot against the Arroyo administration.

Some soldiers assigned in Southern Command headquarters in Zamboanga City told the Inquirer that their senator was June because of the alleged ill-gotten wealth of ex-military officials.

"Even my family is already demoralized," an army sergeant said.

PMA ALUMNI, A-11

P52M still in Garcia accounts, says SolGen

By Philip C. Tubeza
@ Manila
and Marner P. Burgos Jr.
@ Bulacan Bureau

NOT ALL of the bank accounts of Maj. Gen. Carlos F. Garcia and his family were closed before the Senate and Congress issued its freeze order last week, Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo clarified yesterday.

Benipayo said that while some of the accounts were closed, the republic's recovery efforts rose to date to involve a total of P52,318,980.06 in peso and dollar accounts in five banks as of Oct 21.

"There were the reports we got from five banks covered by the freeze order. We are still waiting for the other two [financial institutions]. I cannot disclose the identities of those banks [but hasn't reported back]," he said.

The solicitor general revealed the total amount frozen so far is

PESOS P52, A-11

Wife deposits more dollars after US bust

By Carlos Pada
and Cynthia D. Balana

THE WIFE of Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia deposited more than $600,000 in an American bank less than a month after their son was arrested by United States Customs authorities in San Francisco, California, in Dec. 10, 2003, for attempting to bring $100,000 in cash into the country.

The transactions of Clarita Fajardo-Garcia in January 2004 from part of the records of the Office of the Ombudsman, which were furnished by the Senate committees on national defense and on banks.

WIFE, A-12

POPULATION ROW

Leave it to couples, GMA tells big business

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Blanche S. Rivera

IN THE FACE of criticism that it was doing little to curb the country's rapid population growth, Malacañang yesterday said it was sticking to its policy of leaving it to couples to choose what birth control method to use and local governments to decide what fees to charge in their planning program to adopt.

For its part, the Department of Health assured critics that the government had enough contraceptive pills to distribute to willing couples despite the Roman Catholic Church's opposition to artificial birth control methods.

Socioeconomic leaders earlier urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to initiate an aggressive and more active policy on population control. They insisted that 1.8 million people were being added to the Philippine population every year, outstripping the ability of the country to feed millions in food and educate all its people and fronting its labor-national competitiveness.

But Arroyo, a devout Catholic, has said the supreme family planning, but she has refused to endorse artificial contraceptives despite the fact that the Philippines has one of the highest birth rates in Asia at 2.36 percent annually.

LEAVE IT, A-10

THERE'S more where these came from, declares Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit.

8 top generals eyed to compose court-martial

By Alcuin Papa

A SHORT LIST of senior military officials who will compose the court-martial that will try Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia was announced yesterday.

Lt. Gen. Efraim Adan, Armed Forces deputy chief of staff and spokesperson, said the officials being considered were: Maj. Gen. Raymond Tesoloro, chief of the Central Command; Maj. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, commander of the army's 2nd Infantry Division; Maj. Gen. Jaime Flordeliz, Air Force inspector general; Maj. Gen. Allan Cabahug, chief of the Special Operations Command; Maj. Gen. Rafaelito Garayo, deputy chief of staff for Civil Military Operations (J-7); Rear Adm. Alexander Alexandre, deputy chief of staff for electronics, communications and information sys-

8 TOP, A-11

A3
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2004

WEATHER FORECAST

Second **FRONTPAGE**

TERROR SUSPECTS. Army chief Lt. Gen. Efren Abu and AFP spokesperson Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan look at the three suspects (from left) Abdul Manap Mustang, Mamasaro Usop and Hamid Mahipon during their presentation to media...

Plot to bomb US Embassy foiled–AFP

By Aissa Pagu

THREE suspects in the Davao City bombings last year who also allegedly planned to bomb the United States Embassy in Manila have been arrested, the military said yesterday.

The plot to bomb the US Embassy on orders of the Jemaah Islamiyah Southeast Asian terror network, was foiled after the three suspects were arrested early this month, said Armed Forces spokesperson and deputy chief of staff Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

Adan presented to the press Abdul Manap Mustang, also known as Al-Mok Pasalanggas Tundasan; his fiancée partner Mamasaro Usop; and Hamid Mahipon, also known as Dawud Dud. But the three were not allowed to talk.

Mustang and Usop were arrested last Oct. 6 in a house on Pablo Street in Santa Ana, Manila. Mahipon was arrested another area in a follow-up operation but authorities did not say where the arrest was made.

Adan said that with the arrest of the three, the bombings of the international airport and a wake in March 4, 2003 and the June wharf in Davao City on April 2, 2003 have been solved. The blasts claimed 38 lives and injured more than 140 other people.

He said authorities also thwarted a terrorist plot to launch rocket attacks against seven sensitive installations including that of our foreign allies. It shows the resolve of the Philippine government in its fight against terrorism."

Confession

According to Adan, the three suspects confessed under interrogation that they were responsible for the bombings in Davao City last year, acting on orders of the JI.

They told investigators they were ordered to scout out the US Embassy in Manila last month in preparation for another bombing, Adan said in a statement.

"Mahipon was tasked to design a bomb targeting the Embassy utilizing a cellular phone in connection with their plan to bomb the said embassy," he said.

Adan said Mustang was a bomb expert of the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which he said was the local counterpart of JI, and headed a terrorist cell in Davao.

He said Mahipon was a member of the MILF Rido Group trained in demolitions by the JI.

Mustang also said he was trained by a source Khoder and bomb maker, an Indonesian identified as Zulkifli, who ordered the bombings in Davao. Zulkifli was arrested in Malaysia in late year.

Adan also charged that an Indonesian JI member, Abdul Ahad Ali, who both had supplied the explosives used in the Davao attacks as well as three other bombings elsewhere in Mindanao between 2002 and 2004.

"This shows that the JI have been involved in the training of some of these MILF members in their camp in Mindanao. We shall pursue the investigation further to establish other connections," Adan said.

The link between the MILF and the JI comes despite the MILF's vow that it has cut all its ties with terror groups as part of moves talks with the government.

Cutting terror ties

The government and the MILF signed a ceasefire in 2003 to pave the way for the holding of formal peace talks. But in a condition for the talks to proceed, the MILF vows that it had cut off ties to terror groups.

Despite this, the military has maintained that the MILF still has ties with the terrorist group which has been blamed for the October 2002 bombings in Bali, Indonesia, that left over 200 people dead.

Adan said the military has asked the government and MILF peace panels to bring Rido and other Indonesian nationals who have links with him to justice.

Adan identified three Indonesian nationals as a certain Usman or Fajrul, a certain Encky or Jack, Samrud Al Ghozali or Marwan and Abdul Rai Talanghar or Rijek.

He said Rido and the other Indonesians are believed to be hiding out in an MILF camp in Upper Ida-ig, Buglat, Ilihgayan-dumo.

"Like Rido, these foreign nationals are equally responsible for the bombings and should answer for the criminal offenses committed against innocent people," Adan said.

With reports from AP, AFP

CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH

Private Sector

SHIFT TO WEEKLY INSTEAD OF MONTHLY COMPUTATION OF OIL PRICES

- The Consumer & Oil Price Watch (COPW) will propose to the Department of Energy (DOE) the shift to a WEEKLY moving 4 weeks weighted average computation as this will be more reflective of the movement of oil prices in the world market. If the world market prices are on an uptrend, the increase will be weekly and if the prices are on a downtrend, the rollback will, likewise, be felt weekly.
- Under the present method, price increases are done monthly as the average of the current month is compared to the previous month's average. As such, the increase is made effective on the 15th of the following month for the new players and on the 21st for the oil refiners as they have a 30-day inventory.
- We hope that this new method will correct what is happening today where the oil companies are quick to increase when the world oil prices are moving upward but slow in reducing oil prices when world oil prices are on a downtrend.
- We will present the weekly and monthly methods of computation to the DOE, the oil companies, Senate Committee on Trade and Industry Chairman MAR Roxas, and to the public.

INCREASE IN PETROLEUM EXCISE TAX & OIL SMUGGLING

The COPW is against the reverse bill that will increase the excise tax on petroleum products of P2.00 unless the following conditions are met:

- The prices of diesel and gasoline are down to reasonable levels.
- The tax on diesel is substantially lower than gasoline.
- Oil smuggling is addressed, especially the misdeclaration of gasoline as diesel in the light of the big differential in the current excise tax of gasoline of P4.35 and the diesel at P1.63.

PLAN OF ACTION

The COPW has taken the initiative with the BOC Commissioner George Jereos who convened on October 6th a meeting of ALL oil companies, the Coast Guard, and the Navy to address the issue of smuggling.

The COPW proposed the following measures to contain smuggling:

- Shipping lines must give advance information on ALL inbound oil tankers including the consignee name and destination.
- ALL oil companies must submit a list of their oil depots for diesel, gasoline and crude nationwide.
- Oil companies must immediately report suspect oil shipments to the special Task Force on Oil Smuggling under the Bureau of Customs.
- Customs must be vigilant about misdeclarations arising from the present P2.72 differential on the excise tax imposed on gasoline and diesel which are P4.35 and P1.63 per liter respectively. With the proposed additional excise tax the temptation to misdeclare will be greater.

SUPPLY SITUATION AND PRICE STABILITY OF PORK

In support of the request of Senator Manuel Roxas that the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Trade and Industry resolve the issue of depopulation of hogs as reported by the National Federation of Hog Farmers, the COPW raised the concern of a possible supply problem at the National Price Coordinating Council.

The depopulation was in reaction to the low farm gate prices which dropped from P75 to P55 while the wet market price remained at P120.

The COPW initiative led to the holding of a conference in Malacañang chaired by Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap and attended by the livestock growers and agricultural producers. The group assured the public of enough supply of pork for the holidays and that the price would stabilize at P135 which is lower than the P150 recorded last year due to tight supply.

However, DA Secretary Yap must meet with the National Federation of Hog Farmers to analyze the cost of the distribution chain to keep prices in check since hog raisers do not keep frozen inventory. If necessary, the Department of Agriculture should impose a ceiling on the retail price of pork during the holiday season.

CHICKEN SITUATIONER

At the National Price Coordinating Council, DA Secretary Yap assured the members that there is enough supply of chicken to meet the demand up to the holiday season. We were assured by the Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators (PABI) and the Union of Broiler Raisers Association (UBRA), which aggregately supply 90% of dressed chicken in the country, that they can cover the demand as they have 6.5 million kilos of frozen inventory on top of the 5.7 million kilos allowed to be imported under the Minimum Access Volume (MAV) from October up to December 2004.

COPW estimates that given this excess supply, chicken, which is currently being sold at P80 to P90 per kilo, will go up to P100 to P110 from mid-November to December.

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Police unit to launch e-blotter

By Lolge A. del Puerto

IT IS still far from the high-tech world of Sherlock Holmes or the New York Police, but a local police station is moving in that direction.

The Mandaluyong Police would soon install an e-blotter system as part of the Philippine National Police's efforts toward paperless police work.

Besides the e-blotter, which is considered computer-based and is expected to result in time-to-the-particular-crime reporting, the city police has also begun to use a cheap, e-mail camera that is attached to a computer.

Using the webcam, the police would be able to immediately take photos of suspects or criminals for easy dissemination—that is, once the other police stations install a similar system—most likely by email.

A permanent record

"Later on, we will try to have IAFIS (Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System)," said Sr. Supt. Estevan Velasquez, chief of the Mandaluyong Police.

Under the e-blotter system, the data entered, like name, place and time of a crime's occurrence, could no longer be changed once they are encoded into the computer.

This would help ensure that what is reported by the police at the end of the year is the same as the one once compared overall.

Police are also moving toward using email, to be initially used in disseminating outlaws from the PNP hierarchy distributed to Supt. Felipe Rojas II, chief of the Mandaluyong Police.

A few police chiefs are already computer literate, but not all police stations have Internet access, and not all policemen know how to operate a computer, much less on the Internet.

Specter of hunger stalks RP jails

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE COUNTRY'S prisons have not been spared the twin problems of hunger and poverty, with as many as 14,000 inmates not included in the food payroll for 2004 of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP).

According to a study on jail conditions in the country commissioned by the Supreme Court, the number of prisoners has been increasing by 1.2 percent every year, but the budget allocated to the BJMP had not gone up in the past two years.

These are just some of the problems in the country's prisons systems included in the study submitted by Raymund Narag, a former detainee at the Quezon City jail.

The study done within a seven-month period, describes the dismal plight of the BJMP and details the conditions inside the Quezon City jail. Narag was detained there for seven years before being acquitted in 2003 for taking part in the killing of a fellow University of the Philippines student.

According to a press conference of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Narag and inmates at the Quezon City jail die at an alarming rate of two to five a week. He added that this was because the jails were congested, with 5, 465 inmates packed into facilities meant for 615. There was also a lack of facilities and resources, including food and medicine.

"The chronic overcrowding in the state population, and to say normal or considered to additional resources," he said.

There are around 14,000 inmates under the custody of the BJMP, which had been given a P1.9-billion budget this year, the same budget in 2002 when the jail population was smaller.

At present, each inmate is given a P55 food allowance per day, or P1,650 per month. But since the number of prisoners is growing and the budget stays the same, the inmates have no choice but to make do with the dwindling resources. Narag said the lack gave rise to a "self-help" system often headed by the Very Important Person or "VIP."

A VIP is an affluent inmate who provides money for the maintenance of the cells, food, medicine and other expenses. In exchange, he gets his own room and is allowed luxuries like a TV set.

Such a system, however, is open to abuse and could lead to security lapses, he said. Prison rulers are also known to be corrupted themselves, and the VIPs legitimized their own rules with their own system of punishment.

Jail officials, said Narag, only step in to intervene when a hostage-taking or a riot breaks out, but otherwise leave the inmates alone.

Cramped and dilapidated jail facilities are also a problem, since prisoners have no choice but to stay with the cells, a situation that allows the quick spread of disease like beds and tuberculosis. Medicine is also scarce. In the National Capital Region, only eight nurses attend to 21,000 inmates, according to Narag.

There is also a lack of judges and public lawyers to handle cases, and as a result, inmates stay an average of 3.2 years in jail before their cases are resolved.

This is unfortunate, considering that a Supreme Court survey had shown that only 18 percent of inmates are found guilty, Narag added.

He also attributed the congestion to the passage of the Comprehensive Drug Law in 1002 lowering the threshold for a non-bailable drug offense.

To address the problem, Narag suggested the passage of a Pre-Trial Release Program Bill that would allow certain suspects to be spared jail time and instead be placed under an officer's supervision while the trial is ongoing.

Such a bill would not only lessen the number of prisoners and save money, it would also allow suspects to function as productive members of society instead of wasting their potential.

"If you should punish us, punish us in the correct and proper way," Narag said.

"Punish us with loving justice, one that would make us return our ways and prepare us for our return to the mainstream when we are released from prison," he added.

PIPE DREAM
Workers connected by the Manila Water Company take a break from digging along a street in Barangay Valenzuela in Quezon City. The water line has embarked on a multibillion-peso service expansion and improvement project to better serve its clients.

Teen in Martinez slay freed

By Leila B. Salaverria

A TEENAGER who was arrested earlier in connection with the during-day of Manila Police Supt. Rhonda Martinez has been released by the police for lack of evidence that would link him to the crime.

The 17-year-old boy was one of two men caught by police in iconic Yano Oan, Caloocan City, during a pre-dawn raid in the area.

"He released him because he was not positively identified by witnesses," said NPD-10 senior Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

But the other arrested suspect, Ace Belmonte, still remains under investigation. A witness had identified him as one of the men who attacked Martinez.

Police also said Belmonte was involved in planning the ambush, and tagged him as a primary suspect. The witness picked him out from a lineup of 12 men.

Martinez, a veteran Manila policeman, died from several gunshot wounds in the chest and back at the parking lot of the Victoria police station on Monday. Three others were injured in the incident.

A group that called itself Pentagon claimed they shot Martinez because the policeman had killed other gang leaders and attacked protesters. But police officials said drug lords whose operations he had disrupted could have ordered the killing.

Martinez' wife, Luzelda, had said earlier that Lawrence were also possible suspects.

Manila principal goes on leave

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE SCOREBOARD reads 1-0.

Teachers and students of a Manila high school yesterday felt they scored a point in the song of protest battle their principal, whom they have been wanting to boot out of the post.

Classes in Tondo Elementary School 2 when teachers and students walked out of their classes to mark the ouster of school principal Alice Silva, whom they accused of abuse of authority after she prohibited the school caroling.

"We are rejoicing, and the students are so happy because Mrs. Silva would be gone for some time," said Grace dela Cruz, a teacher who was among those who led a peaceful protest against Silva.

One week

She did not report for work yesterday, Teachers learned that she had filed a leave of absence and would be gone until Oct. 26, said dela Cruz.

The teachers said they would launch other protests if Silva returns.

"This is just half of our victory. We will push through with our calls until her other sins come back," said dela Cruz in a phone interview.

She did not answer calls made by the inquirer to her mobile phone. She, however, sent a text message.

"I filed a leave to rest. I will be on leave so-relieve-now," said Silva.

The principal's lawyer, Alexis Rosete-Gale, had said Bo wanted to operate the canteen and sell

Anfernee needs your help

AT TWELVE years old, Anfernee Seth de Guzman is already facing against time.

Born with a bilateral cleft, a rare facial condition in which bile ducts are absent, Anfernee needs to undergo a liver transplant before the year ends to save his life.

His parents Pedrito and Nelita said he was diagnosed with biliary atresia when he was a month old.

A basic procedure, wherein doctors cut a small portion of his small intestine and assemble it to his liver to allow bile to flow out, served him well for two years.

However, Anfernee is now exhibiting signs of liver failure, doctors told the parents.

They are now asking readers to help them raise P3 million for a liver transplant.

Donors may reach the family at 2242 Dayo St., La Paz Village, Makati City, or through 0916-2828646 and 0910-3092702 or landline 899-4262.

Donations can also be deposited to Metrobank account no. 3260-0980-1 with account name Emilita de Guzman. DP Anfernee Seth de Guzman or to Pedrito's SSS savings account no. 3760-9468-91. —Jocelyn Uy

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REVENUE ENHANCEMENT ADVISER

Miriam hubby joins Cabinet

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday swore into office Narciso "Jun" Santiago Jr. as presidential adviser on revenue enhancement (Pare).

Santiago, who will hold Cabinet rank, is the husband of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

Pare is a new position created under the Office of the President to "help the government find ways and means to ease the current fiscal crisis."

Ms Arroyo had ordered the Bureaus of Internal Revenue and Customs to enhance revenue collection and plug the leaks in their systems. She had also asked Congress to pass eight revenue measures to raise P200 billion to address the budget deficit.

Santiago's office said he would bring to the position a wealth of experience "gained from more than 20 years of public service during which he specialized in community relations and customs law."

Santiago served as an undersecretary in the Department of Interior and Local Government in 1999-2001 during the Estrada administration. As such, he was involved in policy development, the resolution of local problems and the implementation of strategies to combat illegal drugs and rehabilitate drug users.

His wife, Senator Santiago, an avid Estrada supporter, switched allegiance before the May 2004 election where she ran under Ms Arroyo's K-4 senatorial slate.

Jun Santiago, a law graduate of the University of the Philippines, also served in the Bureau of Customs from 1975 to 1991.

At the BOC, he rose through the ranks to become special assistant to the commissioner and chief of the pier and investigation division. During his stint, he received the Commissioner's Commendation four times for outstanding performance in law enforcement.

Also sworn into office by President Arroyo at Malacañang's Ceremonial Hall were 25 other appointees—former Tarlac Gov. Margarita "Tingting" Cojuangco as president of the Philippine Public Safety College; preacher Roger Arienda as deputy secretary general of the Ad Hoc Council on Values Formation;

Waldo Flores and Joaquin Lagonera as senior deputy executive secretaries; Jose Tale, Manuel Gaite, Susana Vargas and Richard Ferrer as deputy executive secretaries;

Manuel Domingo as presidential adviser in the Office of the President; Gamaliel Cordoba, undersecretary in the OP;

Ferdinand Mahinay, presidential adviser for Region IX; Raymundo Roquero, executive director of political coalition affairs; Myrna Yao, chair of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women; George Jereos, commissioner of customs; Roberto Geotina, deputy customs commissioner;

Gregorio Tan Jr., National Food Authority administrator; Alipio Fernandez Jr., immigration commissioner; Erlinda Uy, Court of Tax Appeals associate justice; Ricardo Ochia, technical assistant for the Mindanao Economic Development Council, and Teodorico Haresco Jr., director of Philippine National Oil Co.

Philippine National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay, Deputy Director General Ricardo de Leon, Police Directors Oscar Calderon, Arturo Lomibao and Vidal Querol were also sworn into office.

New POC post for Dayrit–Peping

By Marc Anthony Reyes

COJUANGCO

DAYRIT

IF THE incoming Philippine Olympic Committee president wants to have his way, outgoing head Cojuangco Dayrit would remain in the local Olympic body in chair capacity.

The new position was suggested the other day by equestrian president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr., who is now set to take over the POC presidency unopposed after Dayrit officially announced yesterday his decision not to seek re-election in next month's poll.

"Mr. [Dayrit] has shelled something for the SEA Games and the charge of leadership must not be compromised now," said Cojuangco after Wednesday's Philoc meeting. "We need to be reminded of certain things and certain obligations that need to be met."

Dayrit's decision to bow out of the POC race came a day after he relinquished his position as Bulacan "Chief" Pagbilao[gan] as president of the Philippine Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee (Philoc) which is overseeing the country's preparation for the hosting of the SEAG next year.

He also stressed his the appointment of Cojuangco as Philoc vice-chair is to enhance the former Tarlac congressman's role as major fund-raiser for the SEAG. "At least now that Mr. the vice-chair, I will have an authority where I reach out to friends for help," he said.

Lifting the veil for all to work together, Dayrit, who is also the president of the SEAG federation, said he now holds the greater responsibility of ensuring the continued success of the SEA Games program.

"The objectives of the SEA Games are of greater importance than anyone's interest in the POC," Dayrit said. "To ensure the success of the Games, all concerned officials should put their respective roles on the table."

Dayrit is concurrently chair of the SEAG executive committee, which is the management body of the federation. He also recently became the first Filipino vice president of the Olympic Council of Asia.

Cojuangco's supporters said Dayrit had expressed his wish to withdraw from the Nov. 27 elections last week. But Cojuangco, a former president of boxing and golf, stressed that there was no "exchange deal" forged between him and Dayrit.

Senators said the POC polls would still take place for positions where there are contending parties.

In Cojuangco's stint are taekwondo exec Robert Aventajado as chair, weightlifting's Rep. Mitos Magsaysay as first vice, judo's Reynaldo Ayala second vice, wushu's Julian Camacho treasurer and squash athlete's Marie Tan Dungca as auditor.

Existing board seats are badminton's Edgar Aglipay table tennis' Victor Ma. Ituarte, softball's Harry Angeles and [illegible] Antonio Eduvala.

A SEAG advisory committee is also being formed with boxings' Ricardo Lapid, bowling's Steve Dimbleman, silkstar's Go Teng Kok, tennis' Buddy Encarnacion and golf's Jimmy Lopez as members.

DOJ order on 'Fil-shams' stumps Eala; solons train guns on teams

By Jasmine W. Reyes

A SHW order from the Department of Justice (DOJ) barred Philippine Basketball Association commissioner Noli Eala [illegible].

Eala admitted he was stumped by a one-page letter from Justice secretary Raul Gonzalez Wednesday requesting the PBA to submit a list of other foreign-born players suspected to have falsified their citizenship documents.

"We don't know what he means by that order. We can only give him a list of all the Fil-shams. But I don't think we can pinpoint people who are suspected to have questionable documents. We don't want to unduly threaten any of our Fil-Americans," said Eala.

"It's not our job. As far as we're concerned, all the documents submitted to us were from the government and that's what we've been asking the DOJ...we want them to tell us whose documents are questionable," he said.

The DOJ is no longer just looking for foreign-born aspirants who faked their papers to acquire Filipino citizenship.

The department has asked the National Bureau of Investigation to form a special panel to go after and press charges against those who [illegible] for suspect purposes their false documents.

"It is beyond our jurisdiction. We can't stop the DOJ, the NBI or any government agency from doing what they want to do. But I don't think there's a wide spread conspiracy," said Eala.

"The only thing I'm opposing for is a little-referred-to and remote, [illegible] this a circus. People should not ride on

(TOP) 10

RP lady golfers struggle

THE PHILIPPINE women's squad struggled on opening day of the Women's World amateur Golf Team Championship with a 359 total [illegible] itself in 32nd place out of 48 teams at the Rio Mar Country Club in Rio Juan, Puerto Rico.

Joyce Aguja made a good account of herself with a one over 75 but Lara Tabora turned in a forgettable 86 in the three-to-play, two-to-count format. Sisters Doreen Amperos didn't count with an 87.

The Filipinos stood 21 strokes off Canada, which posted a 337 to enter a two-stroke lead over the United States and five over Korea, which had 339 and 341, respectively.

Chinese Taipei came in fourth at 342, followed by Germany, Spain and Sweden in joint fifth at 344.

Defending champion Australia was tied for 22nd with a 352.

Aguja was tied for 39th spot in the individual race, 6 strokes behind Mary Jane Laporte, who scored a championship record round of 67.

Christmas chicken supply assured

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE COUNTRY will have enough supply of chicken in the market in the last quarter of the year, especially during the Christmas season, Sec. Ramon Magsaysay said yesterday.

Magsaysay gave the assurance after his agriculture committee met with leaders of the poultry industry yesterday.

He also said the expected big demand for chicken in December would cause its price to swell but noted this price hike would be "temporary."

"The price increase would be not more than 10 percent," Magsaysay told reporters, of dressed chicken currently selling at P100 per kilo.

Despite could buy chicken meeting in November and freeze them if they want to for use in December, he added. He said the assurance would not have the same problem it had in the last quarter of last year when the supply of chicken slumped because of the avian flu virus that hit many countries.

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UK minister hails RP stint in Iraq

ALLIES STILL. Visiting British Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs Douglas Alexander (left) with President Macapagal-Arroyo and US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone in the recent ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary of the Leyte landing by Gen. Douglas MacArthur in Palo, Leyte.

By TJ Burgonio

THE PHILIPPINES' token humanitarian contingent in Iraq, whose abrupt pullout in July was roundly criticized by the United States and Australia, has been praised by a visiting official of the United Kingdom, the US' chief ally in the war against terrorism.

Douglas Alexander, UK Minister of State for Trade, Investment and Foreign Affairs, said the Philippines' deployment of a humanitarian force to Iraq was an indication that it recognized the "devastation that terrorism causes."

"I pay tribute to all the Philippine military and civilians personnel in the multinational force in Iraq and to the humanitarian reconstruct which made such a valuable contribution to peace and rehabilitation in [that country]," Alexander said.

"Their effort is more vital to restoring peace in Iraq," he added, in a speech before the British Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati City Tuesday night.

American and British forces led the "coalition of the willing" in the invasion of Iraq early last year to a presumptive pre-emptive bid to disarm, who was suspected of having weapons of mass destruction.

The Philippines sent a 96-man humanitarian contingent to Baghdad in August last year but withdrew the troops in July, a month ahead of schedule, to meet the demand of Iraqi militant who had seized Filipino truck driver Angelo de la Cruz and threatened to behead him.

The withdrawal drew sharp criticism from Washington and Canberra, which claimed the move would only embolden terrorists.

Alexander, who is in Manila on a three-day visit, stressed the importance of bilateral, regional and international cooperation to effect the threat posed by "terrorists and fanatics bent on undermining the civilized world."

"In Europe and in Asia, in our own countries, we have direct experience of the horror of terrorism. A huge collective effort is now required to defeat this scourge. So I welcome the opportunity to work with the Philippine government on countering the terrorist influence," he said.

While it strongly supports the Philippines' campaign to root out terrorism, Britain will provide over $1 million to counter-terrorism aid, said Alexander, the first British minister to visit Manila after the Arroyo was elected president in 2001.

"The UK and the Philippines enjoy a warm relationship. We share a similar outlook on so many issues. The fight against terrorism is one such issue, where the UK and Philippine governments are working closely together to combat this international scourge," he said in a statement released by the British Embassy.

Alexander also said that while economic relations between Britain and the Philippines was healthy, it could be strengthened further.

"I will be talking to Philippine and British business leaders to discuss how we can help boost the economic partnership between our two countries, and ensure that British businesses continues to play a part in the development of the Philippine economy for the benefit of both our peoples," he said.

Trade between the two countries rose to over $1.56 billion each year. Britain is among the top three foreign investors of Philippine goods in the last 10 years, a third of foreign financial investments had come from the UK, according to the embassy.

Britain has major investments in Manila, concentrated in power, energy agribusiness, transport, water and financial services. There are between 180 and 200 British companies in the Philippines.

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SPRATLYS OIL HUNT

Viets shrug off China fury

HANOI—Vietnam dismissed Thursday China's protests over its invitations for oil and gas companies to bid for exploration rights near the disputed Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.

Nine-owned Petro-Vietnam opened the tender process on Oct. 1 for blocks 122-126 in the Phu Khanh basin off Vietnam's south-central coast and 06 gas and oil blocks off March 31 next year for bid submissions.

"I want to affirm that these nine blocks are entirely situated within the continental shelf of Vietnam and belong to their exclusively to Vietnam," Vietnamese foreign ministry spokesman Le Dung told reporters.

He comments come a day after China's foreign ministry expressed its "grave concern and strong dissatisfaction" at the invitations and reiterated its "indisputable sovereignty" over the Spratly Islands.

Beijing also warned Hanoi not to take any unilateral actions that would further complicate the dispute over the archipelago, which has abundant fishing grounds, but most say sea lanes and especially are on vast oil reserves.

Besides Vietnam and China, Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan also claim sovereignty over all or part of the chain of more than 200 islets, reefs and atolls with a total land mass of less than five square kilometers over 1940 square miles.

Europe for Brunei, all the claimants have military personnel stationed across the Spratlys, where deadly clashes have occurred in the past.

In November 2002, China and the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations agreed to avoid any actions that could heighten tension over the flashpoint area.

Last month Vietnam protested an agreement between the Philippines and China to explore for oil and gas there. AFP

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Suspected drug lord may escape gallows

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez on Wednesday raised the possibility that suspected drug lord Cedric Tan would be spared from the death penalty so that Hong Kong would agree to his extradition.

Gonzalez said Hong Kong authorities had asked the Department of Justice (DoJ) that, when extradited to the U.S. custody of the Cebu drug lord, who is wanted in a $1.2-billion worth of shabu interchange, Tan's brother-in-law Dante Ong, also arrested with Tan, would be released if he were repatriated to the Philippines.

Tan was arrested on Hong Kong on Oct. 1 carrying $920,000 in cash and small amounts of shabu and ecstasy.

"We cannot guarantee [that he would not be executed], but we told [them] that the Court of Appeals would [ultimately] review his case and the President has the power to commute death sentences," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said Hong Kong officials had told him they were willing to [extradite] Tan "reasonably" to Philippine authorities through the usual channels of extradition.

"What is [unreasonable], I myself will go to Hong Kong to [advise] the immigration commissioner go there," Gonzalez said.

He said the Department of Foreign Affairs had canceled Tan's Philippine passport.

He said he had already instructed Philippine consular officials in Hong Kong, through the DFA, to oppose Tan's [application] for work [permit].

"We do not want that to happen," Gonzalez said.

He said the DOJ had received reports Tan was willing to surrender his Philippine passport if he were allowed to post bail.

"But his passport has already been revoked. He's now an undocumented alien in Hong Kong," Gonzalez said.

Yet, it appeared limited for Manchurian he was arrested by Hong Kong authorities, Gonzalez said he had also asked Manila officials for assistance since Tan illegally [illegible] in the Asian Pacific region today.

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MANIFESTO

WE, THE MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY ACADEMY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC. (PMAAAI), EXPRESS OUR GRAVE CONCERN OVER THE ISSUE OF GRAFT AND CORRUPTION INVOLVING HIGH RANKING OFFICERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO ARE GRADUATES OF THE ACADEMY.

WE CONDEMN, IN STRONGEST TERMS, ANY ACT OF GRAFT AND CORRUPTION IN GOVERNMENT BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT PUBLIC OFFICE IS A PUBLIC TRUST.

WE SUPPORT A SPEEDY AND IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION OF PMA GRADUATES SUSPECTED OF COMMITTING GRAFT AND CORRUPTION AND WE ASK THE PROPER AUTHORITIES TO SPARE NO ONE IN IMPOSING APPROPRIATE SANCTIONS AGAINST THOSE WHO MAY BE FOUND GUILTY.

WE BELIEVE, THAT AS GRADUATES OF THE ACADEMY WHO ARE TRAINED TO LIVE BY THE IDEALS OF **COURAGE**, **INTEGRITY** AND **LOYALTY**, OUR DUTY AS OFFICERS IS TO RENDER GENUINE SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY AND PEOPLE.

IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS PEDMAYERS TO MAINTAIN OUR INTEGRITY, BE UPRIGHT IN OUR WAYS AND BRING HONOR TO OUR ALMA MATER, OUR ASSOCIATION AND OUR FAMILIES.

WE EXPRESS OUR STRONG SUPPORT TO AND AFFIRMATION OF THE PMA AS AN INSTITUTION THAT PRODUCES IDEALISTIC OFFICERS OF THE ARMED FORCES.

IN THE LIGHT OF THESE CONTROVERSIES, LET US NOT FORGET THE MANY PMA GRADUATES WHO SHED THEIR BLOOD AND HELPED SET OUR COUNTRY FREE.

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Foes blame GMA for corruption rating

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SENATORS yawning agreed with the assessment made by the London-based Transparency International which ranked the Philippines in 11th place in its global corruption index and blamed the Arroyo administration's lack of political will to stop the rampant corruption in government.

Administration Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said the corruption report was a "national shame" and exhorted all Filipinos to work together to bring the country back to becoming "a little more trust-worthy, a little more truthful and a little more honest."

The 72 Corruption Perception Index report, released the other day, showed the Philippines holding on to its 11th ranking, a drubbing it has held along with five other countries for the past two years — as the most corrupt nation in a field of 146.

Sen. Ralph Recto said the ruling might be correct "considering the magnitude of the leakages in the tax-collection side, on the contingent liability side, and so on and so forth."

But he said the report should also have included the private sector as the corruption did not just involve government.

Opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña said the government had no political will to stop corruption, and had not made any concrete effort to reinstate the image of the country in the world.

He joked that the Philippines should register because in two years' time, "we could be No. 1."

'No serious effort'

"This has been going on for a long time and there has been no serious effort to improve our status... We are 95 percent (in ranks). I think it is a reflection of the attitude that we have as a people that we keep on allowing corrupt officials to get away with it," said Osmeña.

In the House of Representatives, administration congressmen rejected the Transparency International's assessment, saying it was based on "serious misperception and mis-appreciation" and not on "hard data."

Rep. Douglas Cagas (NPC, Davao del Sur) and Deputy Speaker for Mindanao-Unity Sakapuhin said in a statement that the Arroyo administration had made serious efforts in encouraging anti-government corruption.

Cagas, vice chair of the House committee on good government, said the TI had disregarded such anti-corruption efforts by the creation of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission, the Ombudsman Clearing Committee, and the continuing investigation and prosecution of people involved in corruption, smuggling and tax evasion.

Sakapuhin also cited as a major anti-corruption initiative the enactment of the Anti-Money Laundering Act, aimed at deterring "dirty money" and minimizing corruption in the country's banking system. Michael Lim Ubac

How much does P130M weigh?

By Armand N. Mercado

SINGSON

GMC

HOW MUCH does P130 million in paper bills weigh? Can one measure it in tons?

Those were questions former Sen. Ramon Revilla had tried to answer during the Senate impeachment trial of President Joseph Estrada last year.

Now with the embroilment of friends were Charlie "Atong" Ang from the United States, the chief lawyer of the Senate's defense team believes it is high time the question was answered.

In a telephone interview former Sen. Rene Saguisag said that with Ang's return, the defense panel may finally get the chance to disprove the claim of former Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson that he "hand-carried P130 million in cash to Estrada on Aug. 31, 1998.

"Personally, I look forward to a revival/retrial of Chavit (Singson)'s story," Saguisag told the Inquirer.

Singson, Estrada's erstwhile close friend, said the money had been demanded by the former President from the tobacco excise taxes of Ilocos Sur.

He said the money was withdrawn from the Land Bank of the Philippines by persons associated with Ang.

Singson said he brought the money in paper bags to Estrada's house on Polk Street in Greenhills, San Juan.

Of the total, Estrada reportedly got P70 million, while his wife Loi, son Jinggoy and Ang himself got P20 million, P10 million and P20 million, respectively.

But Saguisag doubted Singson could carry that much money by himself.

"I don't know, but people I've talked to say that that much money is too heavy. It would not be possible to carry the way Chavit related it," he said. "A reenactment will blow up in the face of the prosecution."

The 120 Cabinet Cases of Dom recently ordered Ang's extradition to the Philippines after finding "probable cause" of his involvement in the crime of plunder along with Estrada, Jinggoy Estrada and lawyer Edward Serapio.

US Judge Lawrence R. Leavitt ruled on Oct. 14 that Singson's testimony in the ongoing plunder trial of Estrada was "reliable and admissible in extradition hearings as warranty against punishment."

Told about Saguisag's plan to retrieve his delivery of the money to Estrada, Singson said it showed that Estrada's lawyers were desperate and were willing to "perform every imaginable stunt" to discredit him. Singson is the prosecution's star witness.

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Missing coed found dead in funeral home

By Christian V. Esguerra

All the family had feared, the long wait ended in tragedy.

Relatives of Jennielle Reyes on Wednesday night found her body in a funeral parlor in this town, Laguna, more than a week after the 20-year-old Philippine Women's University student went missing.

Reyes' body had actually been at the San Ramon funeral parlor since Oct. 10, the day she was reported missing.

Police said the body was found that morning near the shoulder of the South Luzon Tollways in Sta. Rosa but nobody was to know that it was the missing student.

Reyes suffered six gunshot wounds, said Senior Supt. Edwin Carreon, the Laguna provincial police chief.

Last Tuesday police arrested seven people, including a 21-year-old woman, who were caught disrupting the Oct. 11 Black Nazarene procession (EEE 666) at a house in Barangay Bitaugan in Nuño Garcia town, Batangas.

Charged with car theft were Gilbert Bonquilla, 26, and his uncle Rafael Bonquilla, 36. Brenwardo Sicher Jr., 27, Edryn Segue, 35, Junna Muñoz, 28, Rufo Melo Jr., 41, and Maria Cecilia Mercado.

Chief Supt. Reynaldo Varilla, the Calabarzon police director, yesterday ordered that the charge in changed to murder, following the discovery of the victim's body.

Carreon said forensic experts were still checking for any signs of sexual abuse.

Reyes left her home in San Pablo City driving her black Civic, at about 2:00 p.m. on Oct. 9. She was supposed to have been on her way to the dormitory in Malate, Manila, after a day on campus.

Carreon said Reyes had been seen leaving a bar in the early morning of Oct. 10. She was never seen again.

Reyes' stepfather Elgin Arthur later told police that he was able to get through to the victim's cellular phone on Oct. 13. The call was answered by a male voice asked—and Reyes was "still asleep" and then turned off the phone, Arthur said.

During interrogation, Gilbert Bonquilla claimed that three people—a woman, Michael, Danilo and an unidentified male—checked in at the mother's Wish Ride Resort in Calauan City at about 7 a.m. on Oct. 11.

Bonquilla claimed that the three sought his help to unlock the car that they were driving, saying they wanted to declare it missing so they could claim against its insurance.

Bonquilla said he offered to take the car to his uncle Arthur Reyes's place in Nuño Garcia. It was here that Bonquilla, Sicher and the five other suspects were arrested by the Batangas police.

Italy to host UN culture program

AMBASSADOR and Mrs Colmenares

THE UNESCO Kalayaan cultural program of the All Philippines Philatelic Group will be hosted by Italian Ambassador and Mrs. Umberto Colmenares at their residence at 1237 Acacia Road, Dasmariñas Village, Makati City, on Oct. 27 at 2 p.m. Theme of the program is "MDG: Sharing Eyed of Friendship in the Nations."

Mrs. Colmenares will give the welcome remarks while the ambassador will deliver the keynote address. They will be introduced by Metrodrive Frontier, AWWS president, and Villa Granada de Gaza, cultural program chair, respectively.

The program will feature a video presentation by the Italian Embassy and cultural members like an Italian song by Minister Counsellor of the Brazilian Embassy, a violin piece by Dr. Beatrice Acosta-Lacsamana, Dr. Pedro Espeleta, Indonesian dance members and a Spanish flamenco dance by Cecilia de Asis.

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A POWERFUL WOMAN IS FLYING TO INQUIRER

Sox make baseball history

Boston authors fall of 'empire' with amazing comeback

NEW YORK—Just three outs from getting swept out of the AL championship series three nights earlier, the Red Sox finally humbled the dreaded Yankees, winning Game 7 in a 10-3 shocker Wednesday night to become the first major league team to overcome a 3-0 postseason series deficit.

Cursed for 86 years, then Red Sox just might be doomed.

"All empires fall sooner or later," Boston pitcher Lenly Lucchino said.

There is no empire this time, no hour of humiliation, better yet for Boston fans, for the Yankees who are left to suffer the memory of a historic collapse.

"It's very amazing," Red Sox manager Terry Francona said.

Scoring eight runs] any of the last-inning deficits that marked the last three games, leading 6-4 after two innings.

David Ortiz, the series MVP Most Valuable Player, started it with a two-run homer in the first inning off broken-down Javier Vazquez, and Johnny Damon spanked Yankee Stadium as the second with a grand slam on Javier Vazquez's first pitch.

After Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter sparked hopes of a comeback with a run-scoring single in the third, Damon put a two-run homer into the upper deck for good. It had to be the fourth.

David Lenny, pitching on just two days' rest, silenced the Yankees' bats until their stunning finish, who just last weekend assisted New York's seventh pennant in nine years one all but a lock. He allowed one hit in six innings. Bobo Montoya started the seventh, his first relief appearance in four years, and immediately sparked chants of the now-famous "Who's Your Daddy?"

Three hits and two runs got the crowd going, but the rally stopped there and Mark Sullbrun added a solo homer in the eighth for a 9-3 Boston lead.

Cheering from Red Sox fans could be heard in the stands, and when pinch-hitter Bubba Trees grounded to second baseman Mike Bynes for the final out, Boston players ran onto the field and jumped together in a mass huddle.

"The greatest comeback in baseball history," Red Sox owner John Henry said.

Yankees players slowly walked off, eliminated on their home field for the second straight season.

"They had a lot of heart. They never gave up," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said.

HEAVEN—for the Boston Red Sox—is celebrating a Game 7 victory right in the heart of Yankeedom, chasing away ghosts of past failures at Yankee Stadium and making New York star Derek Jeter (inset) feel like hell. AP

The World Series will start in Boston's Fenway Park on Saturday against St. Louis or Houston at the National League.

Boston can now try to win the Series for the first time since 1918.

The 1.60 payment for the Red Sox, the first since 1986, will be remembered as the best for one reason. Jeering New York or Yankee Stadium, site of last year's Game 7 meltdown.

None of the previous 26 major league teams to fall behind 3-0 ever mounted a series to seven games. The wild-card Red Sox became only the third of 229 teams in the four major North American leagues to overcome a 3-0 deficit in a best-of-seven series and win, joining the 1942 Toronto Maple Leafs and the 1975 New York Islanders. AP

A-Rod: 'I'm embarrassed right now'

NEW YORK—It's hard to believe the fabled New York Yankees could come apart in such an epic collapse.

Right here, as their hallowed home, in the shadow of all their history, all the monuments, all the championship banners.

"I'm embarrassed right now," Alex Rodriguez said.

After 86 years of domination in baseball's most lustrous rivalry, the Yankees finally folded against the Boston Red Sox on Wednesday.

This was much more than a season-ending defeat—it was an unprecedented choke job. Just three outs from a sweep on Sunday, the Yankees dropped four games in a row, becoming the first team in postseason baseball history to blow a 3-0 lead in a best-of-seven series.

It's never happened in the NBA, it's happened only twice in the NHL.

And now the New York Yankees, the most storied team in all of sports, are right at the top of iconic harrowing list.

"I could care less about that," captain Derek Jeter said. "I don't know how you can rank failure. You're either a failure or you're not."

It will be a painful piece of infamy for everyone in pinstripes. And it will certainly bring the wrath of owner George Steinbrenner on this unprecedented collapse.

RODRIGUEZ...so shocked that trip to the World Series in the middle of Yankee Stadium. Boston fans drained and chained behind the Red Sox dugout.

It was a night many New York fans thought they'd never have to witness. The Yankees are the team that pulls off improbable comebacks—especially against Boston. Not this time.

Jeter summed the pain's on purpose.

"I don't really want to watch another team celebrate," he said.

But A-Rod seemed it all to. "Obviously, that hurts...watching them on our field celebrating."

"History would have told them to give up; it didn't matter to them," Gordon said. "They didn't just think the way." AP

SOARING HIGH: The Boston Blue Eagles basketball squad pose after bagging the junior crown of the 67th UAAP. The Eagles are Mike Cortejos, Jo Reyes, Jobby Tuazon, Jerome Sanrey, Raymond Almario, Wayne Silva, Carlo Medina, Paolo Simon, Joe Pacquiao, Mikee Fernandez, Pirie Nadal, Ralph Belmonte, Anton Perez, Miguel Machuca, Glen Chio and Gio Tiogson. The coaching staffis composed of coach Jaroldo Jarin, assistant coaches Ryan Quiroz, Andrew Cruz, Sonny Tadeo and Enzo Mazarredo, trainer Julie Velasco, team manager Mike Padil, and student managers Marco Cinto, Erick Bugia and Piere Tuason.

Cardinals force a Game 7

ST. LOUIS, Missouri—Jim Edmonds blasted a two-run walk-off home run in the 12th to lift St. Louis Cardinals past Houston, 6-4, and force a decisive game seven in the National League Championship Series.

"I finally hit the barrel after two weeks of struggling. I was just trying to put the ball in play," Edmonds said.

Houston pitcher Tim Mirell (6-3) started the 12th after Astros closer Brad Lidge continued his shutdown playoff with three perfect innings.

Mirell (6-3) walked St. Louis slugger Albert Pujols on five pitches and retired Scott Rolen on a popout before Edmonds crushed a 0-1 pitch over the wall in right field, touching off a wild celebration at Busch Stadium.

"I figured if I could hit something hard in the gap or another base hit, (Albert Pujols) would run hard to get to third and we would get a chance to score something," Edmonds said.

"So that's it. I was just looking for a ball to get a good swing at. I wasn't trying to go deep. I was trying to hit the ball hard," Said Mirell. "I just got a few pitches up, I'm going through a rough stretch."

Edmonds a reported $10,000 by Major League baseball for his actions after allowing a go-ahead homer to Carlos Beltran in Game Four, Julian Tavarez fantasized two homs in his left hand in what the unsuccessful "a postgame incident."

"With his availability for the rest of the series in doubt, Tavarez was pressed into action when St. Louis starter Jason Isringhausen threw a save in the ninth.

After Isringhausen got through the 10th, Tavarez (2-1) retired effectively for Game.

"Once I walked out out of the bullpen, I started thinking about my hand," Tavarez said. "I put it out of my mind and just concentrated on pitching. I got some shots to keep my hand ready. I check a couple shots and some pills." AP

DOJ order stumps Eala

From page A1

some like this," said Eala.

Yesterday Congressmen Francis Nepomuceno Ocampo and John Alcbar (Camarines Sur) urged Gonzales to file criminal charges against basketball owners, agents and managers who encouraged the five players now undergoing summary deportation proceedings after hiring their citizenship papers.

Nepomuceno noted that two of the five—Rudy Hackbill of Cuna Lobo and Neil Sheffield—were representing the country in the Asian Games. An Bodaon of Tilik 79 Trial, another Asian Games star who recommended for deportation but the DOJ couldn't reach him because of an earlier injunction he secured from a Manila Regional Trial court last year.

The other deportees are Neil Bell's Dennis Seay and Joe Dalandanan and Gardner's Alex Crisano.

"This is a very serious blow against the dignity of our country because we are now confronting a law that we have been showing foreign countries (in international competitions). This could set a dangerous precedent for the nation's entire citizens," Nepomuceno said.

Horse racing's leading money earners

Will you see the leading money earners in Philippine horse racing?

As of Sept. 30, one of the country's most prominent horse owners, Fermin Esguerra and Pedro Payot, are the top money-winners, with total earnings of P24,551,342.50 and P13,961,324.24, respectively.

Also in the Top 10 are SB Jesus (P10,057,500.00), Prosperino Torres (P9,366,790.00), RLS Quijano (P7,097,872.50), BG Faustino (P6,086,590.67), Jose Maria Ferrera (P4,794,140.00), FF Uy (P4,368,777.50). Rounding up the elite list are AG de Ubago Jr. (P3,764,164.00), AF Constantino (P3,638,275.00), MO Tolentino (P3,256,705.75), SC Chua (P3,004,362.00). BF Nilos (P4,742,140.00), RC Nilos Jr. (P4,708,779.00), DF Ingle (P4,788,302.00), Don Ramchos Jr.(to (P4,602,450.14) and JL Ramos (P4,602,450.00).

Those racing millionaires will get another chance at glory on Sunday, Oct. 24, in the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite, where the Club Don Juan de Manila will hold its third EDM Derby Day featuring three world-class jockeys from Australia—one of three runners-up—against the Philippines' best.

"We'll all set and ready to go," said club president Jesse Acosta, adding that SOMA, in partnership with Australia's Megan Williams, will also run the Australian Derby.

CLEAN LIVING

Nemesio R. Yrigo

reach the awaiting horses with a hot race between Thoroughbred champion sale-today Some 100 horses will be up for grabs.

The Asante jockeys who will be starting their small here are veteran international Bernadette Cooper, Alexa Dawn Isaacson and Jarrod O'Meara. They will be paired against local riders Rei Olivarez, Bs Romualdez, Jeff Tuason, Marcelino Chequin, Germinador Borbe, Jeff Lutheran and Dianne Bisquel.

Cooper is Australia's top female jockey today A Macau contract rider, she started her career in 1998 and now has become one of the world's top jockeys with her smooth and confident riding style.

Isaacson, on the other hand, has also been a respectable record, having ridden Gray to victory in the prestigious Malaysia Racing Association Cup just last month. The MRA Cup is the Malaysian version of some of the country's major stakes races like the Philippine Presidential Gold Cup and the Manila Standard Cup, whose 2004 edition will incidentally be held on Nov. 25-26 at the Santa Ana Park.

Of late, Asian-native equestrian credentials A battle-tested jockey, he has won several international races, including the Singapore Live City Cup, Penang Spring Trophy and Selangor Pahlawan Trophy, aside from the 1998 Malaysia Sprint Cup (2:33) and 1999 Kharchavan Stakes (1:11 1/5).

It is indeed a historic year for Philippine horse racing. And, as Philippine stars Jaime Ching had said, the single biggest beneficiary of the racing industry's impressive growth is the government itself, which gets a sizeable share from the money derived from the ever-increasing value of the San Lazaro Leisure Park and the Santa Ana Park. Thus far, horse racing has given more than P1 billion in revenue to the national coffers.

Ching also cited the industry players for their full support, maneuvering in particular the difficult racing responsibilities, the racing fans and the racing public at well. And, not to forget top money-earners like Hermie Esguerra, owner of super horse Wind Shoes, and Pedro Payot, president of the much-respected Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners, who shared the last stakes which led to the success of the industry.

CORRUPTION PROBE

Police generals get ultimatum on SALs

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICE generals and colonels were yesterday ordered to submit within a week their statement of assets and liabilities (SALs) for the last five years in an ultimatum issued by Philippine National Police Chief Director General Edgar Aglipay.

Aglipay issued the order after top police officers ignored two previous directives to submit their SALs from Director Avelino Razon Jr. for Metro Manila officers and Insp. Gen. Alexis Castro for the PNP's internal ombudsman.

"I'm ordering all generals down to the rarest superintendents to submit their SALs within a week," Aglipay said as he made the announcement during a command conference at Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna yesterday.

In the absence of these documents, Commander's Internal Affairs Service (IAS) cannot take concrete action on persuasive reports that the large-scale corruption that has fostered the public's accusation on the deemed Patrol is also prevalent in the PNP.

Even before a PNP corruption probe could begin, however, Commander Jim Razon reportedly a host of problems, mostly involving bribing, hampering any investigation.

With only an annual budget of P6 million, he said, it was very difficult for the 800-man IAG to conduct a lifestyle check program. He said his office at Camp Crame did not even have a computer.

Aglipay yesterday told Commander could request for additional funds from the Department of Budget and Management or seek financial help from the PNP, the two mechanisms is in using to investigate for corruption.

The PNP chief likewise assured concerned that the 115,000-strong PNP was free of any financial irregularities.

Asked if fund "conversion," an unlawful practiced in the PNP, he replied: "We let us know, there's none."

He said it was highly unlikely as the allocations for maintenance, operating and other expenses...which take up a third of the PNP budget,...were being spent "from to the last centavo."

For instance, he said the receipt of gas allowance has to be certified by governors in the case of provincial units, and mayors for municipal units. The practice ensures that the allowance goes straight to the field units, he said.

At yesterday's command conference, Senior Supt. Jonathan Ramonida, the comptroller for the Bicol region, reported Aglipay that his regional office has already forwarded his order to distribute 10 percent of the budget among field units and keep the remainder for administrative expenses.

Tax amnesty even for vice lords

By Michael Lim Ubac

EVEN vice lords are qualified for amnesty under the proposed tax amnesty bill.

This was admitted by officials of the Department of Finance and the Bureau of Internal Revenue at a hearing yesterday by the Senate ways and means committee chaired by Sen. Ralph Recto.

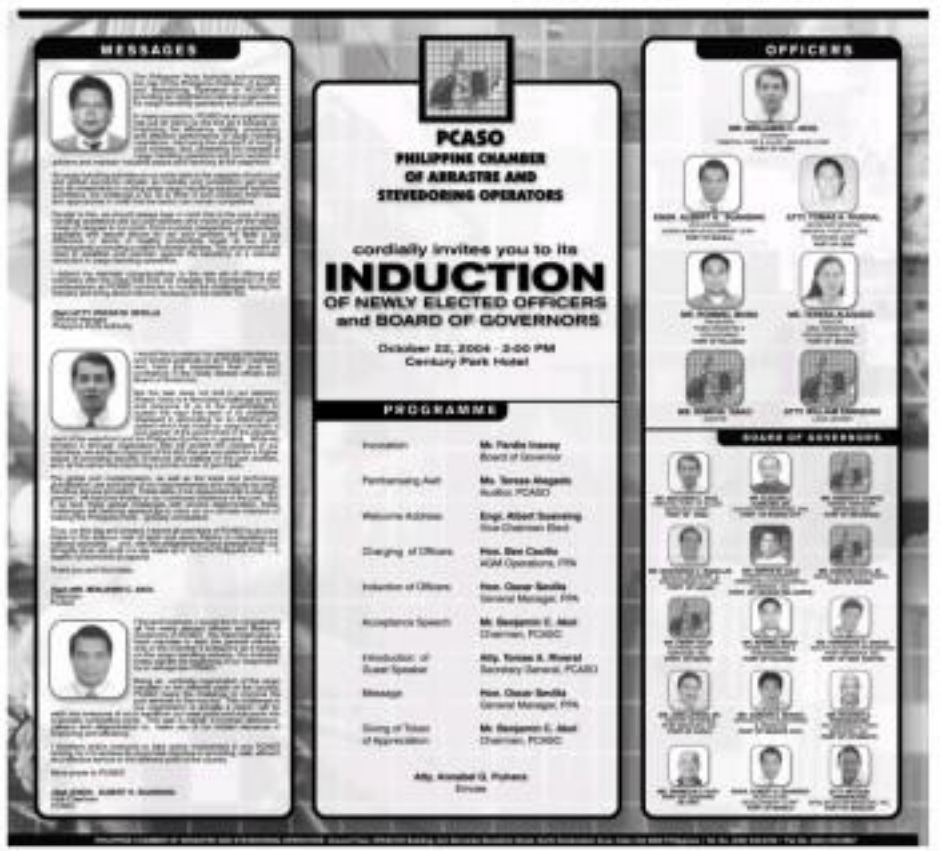
Under questioning by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Leonardo and BIR Deputy Commissioner Jose Balaoro could not say that their heads in agreement when asked if gambling, prostitution and drug lords could seek amnesty from the government.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III then explained to the committee that vice lords could not be prevented from applying for a tax amnesty "because they have not been proven to be vice lords."

"You cannot refuse them. You have to prove first. We should be able to say," said Osmeña.

He, however, explained that the vice lords who had availed of the tax amnesty could not escape criminal liability.

"Later on, one or three years from now, (should) the Ombudsman or judge can be in a 'jueteng' lord, on all the profits he made are ill-gotten wealth (and) then subject to confiscation, penalties," he said.



The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibanez

CIA oversaw abuse at Abu Ghraib, court told

BAGHDAD—Witnesses in the trial of a US soldier charged with abusing prisoners at Abu Ghraib have told the court that the CIA sometimes directed abuse and orders were received from military command to roughen interrogations.

The evidence, from an officer and a chief warrant officer who served at the jail, is among the strongest so far in the Abu Ghraib trial pointing to more senior involvement in the abuse and direct orders from above to "soften up" detainees.

Previously, the Pentagon has characterized the sexual and physical abuse that took place at the prison as the work of a few "bad apples" acting on their own initiative.

Testifying in the court-martial of Sgt. Ivan Frederick, who is charged with five accounts of abusing prisoners, Capt. Donald Reese, a military police commander at Abu Ghraib, said the CIA was involved in abusing detainees.

He said US civilian "OGA" officials—an acronym meaning Other Government Agencies reserved for the CIA—interrogated Iraqi detainees at night, when supervision in the prison was low.

One inmate, who CIA interrogators were depriving of sleep, was suffering from "panic attacks," he said.

"They (CIA) came in at any time of day. They came in through the back door and put (prisoners) in one of the cells. We were told by OGA that they'll be back for three quarters," Reese said via video from the United States on Wednesday.

Frederick's trial, which began on Wednesday at a camp on the outskirts of Baghdad, is expected to conclude later on Thursday.

He has pleaded guilty to the five charges against him, although he has denied some of the details.

Reese, the commander of the 372nd Military Police Company said there were so many types of interrogators on the site it became difficult to keep track. He canvassed staff from the CIA, the FBI, military intelligence and military police.

"It was very confusing," he said. "Sometimes they were civilian clothes, sometime military uniforms. And military intelligence had their name tags removed sometimes."

He said he had been asked documents being held in the prison shortly after arriving in October and wondered when an audit was going on. "Did you ask about the conditions?" Frederick's lawyer Gary Myers asked Reese in court.

"I was told it was the actions of the military intelligence community and it was an accepted practice," Reese replied.

Taking the stand after Reese, Chief Warrant Officer Kevin Kramer, a military intelligence soldier, said he had received an email in August, before much of the abuse is believed to have occurred, demanding that interrogators be "roughened up."

"We were told we weren't getting the intelligence they expected. Therefore we must not be conducting enough interrogations to get the intelligence," Kramer told the court.

Kramer said the email, read out in court and admitted as evidence, had come from a captain in the US-led command headquarters in Baghdad, and told him and others in similar positions to get interrogators in "take off the gloves."

"The gloves are coming off, gentleman, regarding these detainees," it read. It said of Col. Britt "wants the detainees broken." It did not elaborate further. Reuters

Iran given last chance to come clean on nukes

VIENNA—Europe's three heavyweight states were Thursday to give Iran a last chance to assure the world it is not secretly developing atomic weapons, offering valuable nuclear technology in a carrot and possible UN sanctions stick.

Britain, France and Germany are ready to promise Iran nuclear technology including cutting-edge nuclear reactors if Tehran indefinitely suspends all uranium enrichment activities, according to a confidential document obtained by AFP and confirmed in Vienna by diplomats.

Political directors from the foreign ministries of the three European states are in town in Vienna with Iranian foreign ministry international political affairs director Seyed Hossein Zamani-Nia, Iran's ambassador to the Vienna-based UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said.

Ambassador Pirzad Hosseini said Iran expected to receive a proposal from the Europeans this but "did not discuss it" when he met the Thursday.

"We have to receive the text and then take it back to our capital and see if it is approved, and if it is not approved, then that is another story," Hosseini said.

Iran had refused Wednesday to give up on producing enriched uranium, which in the process could eventually find its civilian sources but also the explosive core of nuclear weapons.

"We demand respect for our rights to have nuclear technology for civilian use and that no one has to dispute us on this," President Mohammad Khatami said, but added that "we are ready to cooperate and believe that dialogue and negotiation are the only ways to reach an understanding."

Iran insists its nuclear program is strictly peaceful.

The meeting, which diplomats said was to be held at a secret location to avoid press coverage, is to give Iran a last chance to come clean before the IAEA decides on Nov 25 whether Iran is cooperating with it or not.

The United States wants the IAEA, which since February 2003 have investigating Iran on US charges that the Islamic Republic has a covert nuclear weapons program, to send Iran to the UN Security Council, which could impose punishing sanctions. AFP

Roh can't move capital, S. Korea tribunal rules

SEOUL—South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun suffered a major political setback on Thursday when the Constitutional Court ruled his controversial $46 billion plan to move the capital was unlawful.

Roh had made relocating the administrative capital away from crowded Seoul to two rural counties in the central region of Asia's third largest economy a key pledge in his 2002 election campaign.

The court's nine veteran robed judges, in a televised sitting, ruled by a majority decision that a constitutional amendment was needed to shift the capital from Seoul.

"The case has the act required for the follow ruling. The special law on capital relocation is unconstitutional," said the president of the court, Yun Young-chul.

Roh had argued that moves would allow balanced development in the country, which is the size of Belgium. More than 10 million of its 48 million people live in the capital.

Opponents said Roh's plan was ill thought out and lacked a consensus. They said moving the capital south would send the wrong signal to North Korea because it could be taken to mean the South did not expect re-unification soon.

A spokesperson for Roh's ruling Uri Party described the ruling as "very unfortunate," according to a YTN television news.

Seoul's city council members, academics and over group representatives had lodged the case with the court in July saying a referendum should be held before the government could move ahead with the move. A majority of judges backed that view.

Thanks to media reaction and strident opposition fill on South Korea's main stock exchange after the ruling was announced. The won and bonds were unchanged. Reuters

Corruption rampant worldwide, says watchdog

LONDON—Corruption is crippling the battle against poverty and robbing all rich countries such as Iraq of their development potential, a respected global graft watchdog said Wednesday in an annual report card.

Haiti and Bangladesh were perceived as the world's most corrupt nations in the survey of 146 countries by Transparency International, closely followed by Nigeria, Burma (also known as Myanmar) and Chad.

"This is an amazing evidence again that corruption is still rampant all over the world," the organization's chair Peter Eigen told a press conference in London.

He said countries' economic policy is still perverted by corruption, and therefore poverty cannot be effectively addressed."

The index by the Berlin-based watchdog looks at perceived corruption among public officials and politicians.

Just below the worst-five countries were Paraguay and Azerbaijan, all seven of which scored less than four out of a best possible score of 10.

Only countries failed to score three out of 10, the mark corresponding to Transparency's benchmark for "rampant corruption," while 106, fully two thirds of those surveyed, scored less than five.

The countries with the greatest clean score Finland, New Zealand, Denmark, Iceland and Singapore.

Eigen said developing countries in particular must root out disease in public works if they hoped to improve the quality of life of their citizens.

"Corruption in large-scale public projects at a dizzying altitude is unsustainable development, and results in a major loss of public funds needed for education, health care and poverty alleviation, both in developed and developing countries," he said in a statement.

"If we hope to reach the Millennium Development Goal of halving the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015, governments need to seriously tackle corruption in public contracting," he said, referring to a United Nations target set in 2000.

He added that nations rich in natural resources too often undermined their own prospects with widespread graft and kickbacks among local leaders and foreign investors.

"Oil-rich angola, Azerbaijan, Chad, Ecuador, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Libya, Nigeria, Russia, Sudan, Venezuela and Yemen all have extremely low scores," he said, indicating high corruption.

"In these countries, public contracting in the oil sector is plagued by revenues vanishing into the pockets of brokers of oil executives, middlemen and local officials."

The environmentalist official issued a particular warning over Iraq, which he said was at risk because of its combination of oil reserves and post-conflict instability.

"Whenever there is a rush and a push for reconstruction, particularly when petroleum is involved, the danger of corruption is tremendous," Eigen said.

He and Jeremy Carver, head of international law at the London firm Dillwyn Dunner, said pervasiveness of large-scale public contracts, such as those being disbursed for Iraq's reconstruction and rehabilitation, were potential sources of corruption.

Referring to the US contractor Halliburton, subject of a multibillion-dollar no-bid contract from the US government for work in Iraq, Carver said: "This is an absolutely clear example of what happens in the pure conflict zone."

"Without strict anti-bribery measures, the reconstruction of Iraq will be wonderfully a wasteful diversion of resources to corrupt ends," Eigen said.

He urged Western countries to require oil companies to open their books to show what they pay in fees, royalties and other payments to host governments and state-run companies.

Restricted-circulation newsstand in the past year in Bahrain, Belize, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Kuwait, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Oman, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Senegal and Trinidad and Tobago, according to the Transparency survey.

But a drop in graft was seen in Austria, Bahrain, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, France, Gambia, Grenada, Jordan, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay.

The index was based on polls reflecting the perceptions of business people and analysts from inside and outside the countries. This year's index drew on 16 surveys between 2002 and 2004 conducted by 10 independent institutions.

The organization noted that the index included only those countries that features in at least three surveys, meaning that many countries—including some oil-rich ones—were missing from the list. AFP

French students expelled over headscarf ban

MULHOUSE, France—Three more Muslim schoolgirls were expelled in France Wednesday for flouting a controversial ban on the wearing of religious insignia in schools.

It brings to five the number of girls expelled under the new "secularity law," which has drawn complaints from some Muslim groups that it represents a form of discrimination against Islam.

The headmaster of Louis Armand school in the eastern city of Mulhouse, Rodolphe Richard, announced the expulsion of one girl, identified as Mayela, 15, who had returned to classes after the summer break wearing first a headscarf and later a bandana.

In another case in Mulhouse, a girl identified as Yeta, 16, was expelled from the Lavoisier school. the middleschool's authorities said. A girl was also barred from the Jean Rostkenen school in the northern town of Cour-ne-Vehyrsalm.

On Tuesday, two teenage Muslim schoolgirls were expelled from another school in Mulhouse, the first such actions to be taken under the new law.

Under the legislation, which went into force early in September, the school authorities must first try to persuade girls to remove the headscarf and only if they persist are they being couched be expelled.

The students can appeal the decision.

There are at present 72 school students within the entire school system in France who are currently breaking the new law, according to education ministry figures. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

US raids kill family

MUSAYAB, Iraq—US occupation troops killed a family of six in early against soldier set by al-Qaeda ally Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, within a Iraqi interrogation ministry-commanded Iraq operations on Wednesday, after its manager was kidnapped. A Reuters witness saw a man and a woman and four children, two boys and two girls, being pulled out of their rubble of a concrete home in the rebel-held city of Fallujah, about 50 km west of Baghdad. The US military denied a family of six was killed, saying it launched four 30-lb guided bombs on used by Zarqawi's fighters. Reuters

Prince Harry in fight

LONDON—Britain's Prince Harry was struck in the face with a camera and called a London nightclub Thursday, when he was involved in a scuffle with a photographer, a royal spokesman said. "A bouncer struck him in the face by a camera as photographers crowded around him as he was getting into a car," the spokesman said. "In pushing the camera away, it's understood that a photographer's lip was cut." The incident happened at Pangaea, a nightclub in London's West End. Prince Harry, 20, is the younger son of Prince Charles and the late Princess Diana, and in the past year he has caught in clashes off a public image as a rambling and a playboy. The incident at Pangaea—also reported over how we will act as a bid for "royalty's revenge"—came a week after Harry is escaping clubs in my offices, and accused of shoving in his high school ad season. AFP

China gas blast

BEIJING—An underground gas explosion ripped through a mine in central China killing at least 50 workers and leaving nearly 100 missing in one of the worst mining disasters in recent memory, officials said Thursday. The shafts of the Chenjiashan coal mine near Shaanxi province were packed with around 200 workers when disaster struck Wednesday just as two shifts were changing over, mine officials said. Rattling from gases, over 100 rescuers are searching for survivors. As of early Thursday, 50 bodies had been recovered and 93 miners were listed as missing and feared dead. AFP

Deadly storm in Japan

TOKYO—Japan's deadliest storm in more than a decade unleashed flash floods that washed away entire villages, killing up to 100 people and leaving almost 70 people missing before it made its exit into the Pacific Ocean on Thursday. Rescue workers and Japanese troops worked around the clock, digging through mud and debris and combing flooded rivers and coastal waters to search for the missing. Japanese media reporters Authorities said the storm's death toll was the highest since 1991. "The death toll is likely to keep rising, as we take stock of the damage," National Police Agency spokesperson Seiya Chikasa said. AP

Fear used in great dollops to sway US voters

By Charlotte Raid

WASHINGTON... Swaggering Republican veteran Democrats, armed with the various 20mm rifles, bazookas and hand grenades down. This year's presidential candidates have all but turned their rapprochement and not rival.

"If evidence and historians are not opposed on their merits, they will find in whom we live," warns President George W. Bush. Vice President Dick Cheney outdoes the nightmare of a nuclear-armed terrorist roaming the streets of a US city.

Democratic challenger John Kerry paints for "a world where no American mother should have to live under in night worrying what tomorrow will bring, whether her husband will be safe at work or her children will be safe at school."

The issue has been mounting every day as the race comes down to the wire with each side accompanying its rhetorical barrages with indignant complaints about the other resorting to the "politics of fear."

With national security a prime concern in the first US presidential poll since the Sept. 11, 2001 terror strikes, both camps have pulled out all stops to persuade anxious voters that only their man can keep Americans safe.

Through increasingly incendiary speeches and television spots that range from merely gripping to terrifying, Democrats and Republicans have pushed the envelope of fear-mongering to a level rarely matched by past White House campaigns.

"It's probably worse," said Adam Clymer, political director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center in Pennsylvania. "This is the most dishonest campaign I have ever encountered."

The most powerful images have come off the television screen, with Kerry, Bush and their supporters framing the New 2 ballot as nothing short of a life-and-death decision.

A new Bush spot features images of the devastation in New York on Sept. 11 and accuses Kerry and other left-wing Democrats of undermining national defense. "Are they a risk we can afford to take today?" the narrator asks.

One of Kerry's commercials shows gunfire in Iraq and a car exploding in flames while a narrator bemoans that "Americans are being kidnapped, held hostage, even beheaded" and challenges Bush to say how he will "fix it."

The final factor is an opponents of a war playing a self-described "war president" making his reelection bid on his command credentials in fighting terrorism against a challenger trying to reassure up.

Polls show terrorism and Iraq together outranking the economy as the most important issues in the campaign. The Republicans in particular have done all they could to keep the focus on security, which is Bush's strong suit.

An NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll released Wednesday showed that 41 percent of registered voters had a "great deal of confidence" in Bush in protecting the United States from terrorist attack. Only 26 percent felt that way about Kerry.

The stakes in the election were reduced in their starkest and most simple expression last month by Cheney who told a campaign crowd that it was essential they make the right choice on Nov 2.

"Because if we make the wrong choice now the danger is that we'll get hit again and we'll be hit in a way that will be devastating from the standpoint of the United States," he said.

Democrats screamed foul and accused Cheney of recklessness and irresponsibility forcing him to tone down briefly. But he was soon back at it painting worst case terrorist scenarios he argued Kerry could never handle.

"The biggest threat we face now as a nation is the possibility of terrorists realing up in the middle of one of our cities with deadlier weapons than have ever before been used against us—biological agents or a nuclear weapon or a chemical weapon of some kind to be taken out on the front of hundreds of thousands of Americans," Cheney said Tuesday. AFP

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INQUIRER

OPINION

Commitment

THE DECLARATION of the Philippine College of Physicians' 6,000 members that they would practice their calling in the motherland for at least three years is sufficient reason to bring on the clichés. In the face of the shocking number of doctors crowding nursing schools preparatory to heading for the proverbial greener pastures, it's like a ramble in the dark, a shot to the arm of an ailing patient, a punch of rain in a drought. And because it comes with the promise that each physician will engage in charity work among the impoverished, the declaration triggers the comforting thought that some medical graduates remain committed to the Hippocratic Oath.

But it's cold comfort. Even as PCP president Adrian Felix signed the declaration last week, the phenomenon of doctors studying to be nurses with the end in view of landing a job in a hospital abroad continues to alarm. Physicians in large numbers are now enrolled in nursing schools nationwide, with certain schools opening special sections to take advantage of the clash.

As noted by a study conducted by the National Institutes of Health, the Philippines has achieved another, somewhat dubious, distinction. It is now the world's No. 1 exporter of nurses. As many as 50,000 nurses, among them ex-physicians, have decamped for points abroad in the past three years—a process denounced even in this country that has mostly a policy of labor export for the longest time, and, according to MR director Jaime Galvez-Tan, a distressing development that must immediately be addressed.

The NIH says as many as 4,000 doctors are enrolled in nursing courses. The number presumably includes 350 doctors, some of whom work as municipal health officers, studying at the City Colleges of Urdaneta in Pangasinan. The Philippine Medical Association, composed of 60,000 registered physicians, counts one member out of five taking up nursing. PMA president Ike Garcia concedes that because of the lack of choices, a "health care crisis" now plagues the rural areas—the same areas that generally get the short end of the stick when the going gets rough. As now.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit describes the situation as a "malady" that must be "remedied in body, mind and spirit." But it doesn't look like he'll get much help from an administration that for this year allotted P12.8 billion for health (as opposed to P420.6 billion for the military), and is now quite busy working in it-are hospitals are estimated P400 a month (as opposed to $4,000 a month for nurses in US hospitals, with immigrant status for family members thrown in).

The "malady" is exacerbated by a government policy that hinges, not on the creation of jobs, but on the continuing export of labor worldwide as housemaids, carpenters, plumbers, waiters, beauticians, nannies, drivers, teachers, caregivers, and—the latest demand of the industrialized world—nurses. Is it any wonder that the Philippine Society of Hypertension, recognizing the drain in doctors' ranks as a threat to local health care, is pushing the education of physicians in the basics of entrepreneurship? The PSH position is simple. If money has become a major problem, committed physicians should not turn to nursing and fly but stay and learn the necessary skills to put up business ventures of their own. It's a case of being able to earn enough from a safe activity to luxuriously, support (not only oneself and one's family but also one's life commitment.

Passion

THAT medicine is a commitment has long been displayed by many Filipino physicians, well-known or unsung. Bobby de la Paz showed it in Samar in the early days of the Marcos dictatorship, and paid with his life for it. Ernest "Che" Guevara showed it in the evacuation centers in Pililla, Rizal, and was widely recognized for it.

Guevarra was 25 when he was given the Ramon Magsaysay Award in 2001 for bringing health services to people trapped in conflict zones. And yet he was loath to bask in the recognition, which was bestowed at a time of renewed fighting between government troops and separatist rebels in Mindanao.

His formulation of his feelings vis-à-vis the award was both memorable and evocative of the young doctor's passion: "I can't find the magnitude of the thrill. It's recognition for what I have done, but the situation here is so overwhelming for me to even think about it. With the human suffering here, I can't see the value of my work. Ultimately, I can say that it's joy amidst sorrow."

Poor Filipinos reduced to eating garbage

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

TWO young children, dead the entire day because they ate scraps found recovered from a garbage can and brought home by their father. Did you get that? Poor Filipinos have been reduced to eating garbage. Literally...and are dying because of it.

At the dump site, there's caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. They'll die of starvation if they don't eat, but they'll die anyway if they eat the garbage that they are allowed to scrounge from the trash can.

Can you see the irony? Officials of government financial institutions take home millions of pesos in salaries and perks that travel in style around the world and use the most expensive hotels in the world, but the same government financially assists wealth and capital flight and in other economic ways while the people whom they are supposed to serve wallow in poverty? Our own President travels all around the country and the world with luxurious chaise lands included in her entourage, living in appalling conditions are very far from Malacañang Palace are dying because they are forced to eat garbage!

Poor Filipinos, being enslaved or eating garbage, is nothing new. They have been going on for quite some time, but the officials seem to see nothing more than a bad dream that will go away when they wake up. But it is only in the Arroyo administration that some of them actually died because of it.

The administration was shocked awake by a recent survey that hunger stalks the land. Its knee-jerk reaction was to distribute food coupons. In other words, Filipinos will queue up in long food lines to vote for their daily food coupons. Is that the best that the Arroyo administration could do? Is "the begging bowl of food"? That can President and diplomat travel the globe with begging bowl in hand to beg for foreign aid? Will the country be a long line of Filipinos begging for food coupons.

The food coupons will initially cost the cash-starved government P67 billion. More than a billion pesos will be needed for the administration and local government units, which means that noted leaders and followers of the food patronage will get their fare. In fact, the politicians may get the lion's share of the coupons, in order to make sure that relief goods supposed to be distributed in virtues of calamities often end up in the budgets of the officials and influential traders. That is politics of patronage that will come in handy for the 2005 elections.

DSWD's own Imelda Nicolas, President Diosdado Macapagal, post-emergency jobs to those who were willing to work only in his term. He created the Emergency Employment Administration under the Department of Labor. Workers were given temporary work and build roads. But it brought food to the tables of the hungry. And they didn't have nothing to do but eat.

That was adopted from the post-Depression policy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt of giving emergency jobs to jobless Americans, and it helped America recover from the Depression.

In an economic mid, emergency employment makes a lot of sense. By giving jobs to people, you get them money to spend. They spend the money on buy food, clothes and oils. It's economics. This in turn makes the business produce more of these and take additional workers. The additional workers spend more money to buy what they need and the cycle goes on and on and the economy grows.

But using billions of government money on non-productive things like food coupons goes classic tasking and promotes nothing. There is no classic effect. After seeing his daily ration, the man of the house can lunch and families his fighting cock and waits for the next queue to get his next coupons. He doesn't have to look for a job. He and his family will not starve even if he has no job. He has the administration to thank for this.

TODAY'S JOKE: Ano Live Lapid: Ano ito ang ibig sabihin ng "David cobalt"?

Sen. Boby Barbillo: Eh, ang ibig sabihin niyan nag-dinosaur ng mga Board.

When warriors lived by a code

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

MAJOR Gen. Carlos Garcia invoked his constitutional right against self-incrimination some 48 times before the Committee of the Total.

But "taking the Fifth," as it is better known in American law, is other civil rights is outlined in the Fifth Amendment to their constitution, cannot own cannot, because he is authorized implicated by his own underlined $100,000 in a US airport, his wife's sworn statement before US consular authorities explaining that the money came from "savings, investments and dividends", his unexplained wealth and unexplainable bank accounts. An unlawfully unlawful, Garcia has a right to keep silent from testifying in the courts, his request to remain non-appearance before a congressional panel, the true silence of his fellow officers. Amongst these, taking the Fifth serves to shield the fascist who invokes it, but his use invisible refuses to harangue.

Significantly, when comrades in arms are likewise pursued in crime, it says that a highly political body like Congress and not the courts among alone to carry through an investigation. This episode may set values for the Congressional powers of congressional inquiry. Critics have often parodied these "inquiries in aid of legislation." Perhaps now they may grant our congressmen a little more credit.

Garcia's predicament was also quite evident: he must have found tough sailing in our courts. The Sandiganbayan has earlier thrown out a complaint for an almost P229-million account's ordering unexplained real estate purchased by the AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (Afpres), the military's pension fund. The Commission on Elections also refused after the Philippine Commission investigated after the Philippine Marines The Sandiganbayan declared that the Afpres was not a government entity and therefore no officers were ever found. In other words, unless there government officials. Garcia's case before the Supreme Court that reversed this ruling and allowed the case to proceed, the Sandiganbayan would have forever insulated the Afpres from investigation.

Do the Sandiganbayan persists. More recently, a different former Brig. Gen. Jose S. Ramoncal, one of those implicated in this issue, is known for the United Senators that such relations, were the erroneous objections of the constitution.

Earlier the Court of Appeals has granted the request to the Anti-Money Laundering Council to freeze Garcia's assets, it was only after Gen. had already withdrawn P.5 million, capital issue to a reported P1.5 million withdrawal.

The supremely dense Garcia-Garcia's legal income, his declared assets, and his newly-exposed millions gave rise to a close case for the forfeiture of unexplained wealth, as expatriated. It provided for by law. He our law-enforcement officers, "Where you got your money?" or saying, "Have you, gentlemen."

Some critics finds our congressmen by "grandstanding" during the family hearings. I disagree. It offers our elected legislators to take the military to task. But the Senadores, who is only in control for the president another magnifies the Wendimere Cabinet men and women who are known of an electoral mandate and independent upon the President's political leverages. And, but for other strong reasons, are not subject to the same political pressures. They can take risks that the administrations are thwarted, their positions is unusual. They are incapable of outrage because they stood on dangerous ground when they inquire into military perks. Only the rest of us, the military can stand up to our duties of office. Hurried few hours' sleep together cases, and a week Edsa I or split-chess scandals.

But our prospered and pre-shaped incident is our martial law legacy that we have our outposts. Abra Edsa I, many had hoped that a Truth Commission would look into the record of human rights abuses during the dark years, but preparations prevailed. Better to forget the past, look at the future and move forward, for the military got narrow all over again. Better still, move it to the courts of Bonifacio to hear the human rights cases, beyond the walls of our unsentenced politics, "unwilling and unable to prosecute."

We learned dearest civil cases around, and not before US customs authorities from us, do our own bar charges have been rounded of injunction wags either to avoid a whitewash, or to prevent it. We should not be prevented or, as we have seen, be subjected to the right after Edsa I, and until it only we are getting the gist for our talking our troubles to account for the tragedies that happened under martial law. We learned justice for peace once before, and needed the justice process all over again.

In history, as various cultures all over the world, warriors have held a special place but were, in turn, held to a higher code of behavior. The poets so extolled the moral contrast with it the duty as world is rude human and saintly as the name of Godsend, Saint Michael. It is a burden for as long as valor is judged in hands. Are acts of bravery and for audience to judgment. That code lives for as long as soldiers honor that their Creditors to a nation larger than the self. It is here where warriors become humanists, inspired by the new possession, in basic interest, inspired by the next roundtrip, it has often the badges of courage are sound for managing deeds and signing speeches.

The professional soldier becomes nothing but a mere tool. Mother is a glorified private until the moment he serves a cause personal to himself and his house.

The claim is sometimes an not about hypocrisies. They are about ideas warriors dare to die for good like. It is not easier for warriors to live by the code when they opposed to die by that code.

Comments are mail pangalangan@up.edu.ph

The Leyte landing

ANALYSIS

Armando Doronila

EARLY next Wednesday, in ceremonies to be held in Tacloban, Leyte, President Arroyo will lead the nation in commemorating the 60th anniversary of the landing of Gen. Douglas MacArthur and his troops on the beaches of Leyte, which marked the beginning of the end of the Japanese occupation of the Philippines.

The Leyte landing was the first major military operation to liberate the Philippines from the Japanese occupation, which lasted from 1942 to 1945.

The Leyte landing has taken on significance since the first anniversary of Philippine independence on July 4, 1946, which marked President Diosdado Macapagal as the first leader to declare the observance of Independence Day on June 12, the day in 1898 when Emilio Aguinaldo proclaimed the Philippine revolutionary republic in Kawit.

Leyte is more significant to Americans than to Filipinos, because from they emerged as "liberators" from the Japanese occupation. It is not that July 4 wasn't also important to us that the Philippines, the first place where the Japanese decided to liberate themselves from American military occupation. In Kawit, Filipinos sees the message that independence was not a gift bestowed upon a vanquished people by their own sponsors. Only 4, as independence Day had a humiliating connotation. The mockery of independence was more glaring on national pride in the light of the fact that July 4 is also the date of Philippine-American Friendship Day.

The Leyte landing and the independence grant of July 4, 1946, by an act of the US Congress, originated that freedom was a gift, a transfer from a benevolent liberator.

The other day, the Leyte landing was commemorated on the beach where Gen. Douglas MacArthur waded ashore with Filipino leaders led by President Sergio Osmeña, accompanied by Maj. Gen. Carlos P. Romulo, who had escaped in order lands, more for his rhetorical gifts than his combat record.

The Leyte landing held tremendous importance to MacArthur. It is the event in which MacArthur redeemed his promise, "I shall return," when he abandoned the Philippines on March 11, 1942, leaving from Corregidor by military to Australia, at the doomed defense of Bataan and Corregidor was crumbling in the face of the relentless assaults by the Japanese troops.

It was from Australia where MacArthur began the long, bloody island to island leap-frogging campaign that led to Leyte in 1944.

There is controversy over what MacArthur really said upon setting ashore in Leyte. His own memoirs, quoted by Ambeth Ocampo, told a long-winded theatrical piece, reminiscent of the dramatic theatrical presentation of great generals of history to spur on their troops before they went to battle. A discrete version is contained in the book, "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night: Struggle in the Pacific Theater of World War II." The book says that about four hours after the initial landings, shortly after 12 p.m., MacArthur, accompanied by his staff and officials, splashed ashore.

"As reinforced men marched," says the book, "MacArthur strode to a battery set up on the palms, and in an emotion choked voice, declared, 'People of the Philippines, I have returned!'"

As the Leyte commemoration nears, US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone read an instructive message from President George W. Bush which said that the landing was a "pivotal moment" in World War II and a "pivotal event in the long history of friendship between the Philippines and the United States."

Leyte tends to make Filipinos forget that they had to pay a heavy price for their "long history" of association with the United States. The ties that have existed by country supersede over unequal economic and political relationships. The most vocal of these episodes was the withdrawal of the Filipino contingent from Iraq to save the life of a Filipino overseas worker hostage in Iraq by terrorists. The withdrawal marked the breakaway of the Philippines from the US-led coalition on the war on terrorism.

The Philippines and the United States had a common enemy in World War II: Japan. Today they have a common enemy in terrorism. In today's context, the Philippines need not search to the ruins of fighting with other countries for United States anti-terrorism Australia. But Philippine principles and independence have been different from those of its strongest allies in the "coalition of the willing."

We're all responsible

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

(Excerpts from a talk I delivered in one of the sessions in the Annual Policy Forum on Development on HIV/AIDS, sponsored by the UNDP ESPAID and Department of Foreign Affairs, held at the Dusit Hotel, Makati, yesterday, Oct. 20, with Dr. Zaldaira Guerrero, deputy executive director of ESPAID, as main speaker.)

WHAT are the prospects of galvanizing public and private efforts to slow down the spread of HIV/AIDS in the Philippines?

Not very bright, if the debate about condoms and Valentine's Day is illustrative (to usurp and gravity of the problem.

The first story concerns the Philippine Rally in, quarter... More than five years ago, I received a letter from Teresa Gonzalez... Do the occasion of Valentine's Day Teresa was coming out with a "stimulator flavored" condom; one among a line of condoms in various flavors that had been developed after sex workers, who were being taught how to place condoms on their customers orally, complained about the unsavory taste of latex. My column about the story drew more than a few jibes on all for the "chocolate" condoms, but for some reason, the issue erupted, it was rejected.

I asked my friend to fax me a copy of the ad, and I still found it amusing. Perhaps I'm prompted to make a point on their behalf. I have called up the advertising departments ... and was politely told by the boss that the president of the company was not amused by the ad, and that was that. But they would surely like manufacturers of condoms to consult and use the services of the advertising agencies.

Perhaps I overestimated what is considered acceptable in a daily newspaper. But it merely can be argued that the ad was in poor taste, and that the use of the flavored condoms, why can't condom marketers?

A FEW years later, another Valentine's Day, Ad-vocates of and supporters of a Catholic parochial school had circulated a letter protesting the "free condoms" promo of the 7-11 convenience stores, one of which was located near the school. The letter, which was addressed to the promotion, saying it "encouraged" young people to indulge in premarital sex. The letter was signed by the principal of the school, Fr. Ed Ignacio, who was also a member of the Archdiocesan Commission on Family and Life.

I was disappointed that the campaign apparently reached 7-11 management, and in a matter of days, they decided to stop selling condoms in their stores from then on. This, despite the condom marketer's promise that the "free condoms" promo was not their idea but the store chain's.

We must remember that the Philippines, or at least those in urban areas, take Valentine's Day seriously. But while it's considered fine to market romance and even sex on Valentine's, appropriately with tasteful marketing, almost contraception and safe sex.

Perhaps this explains the "free condom use" in this country. Quite apart from the crowding out of responsible sex, there is also a case to be made for very practical matter of accessibility and availability.

FOR some years now, religious organizations and sectors from Catholic schools have been reported to be going on "door to door" campaigns to convince the management of supermarkets and drugstores to remove condoms from their shelves. Now without shoppers would pick them up with little fuss and minimal embarrassment. Some of the stores have internal plastic wrappers around the "personal items" counters, where buyers would have to specifically request them ... effectively keeping condoms inaccessible to young people.

Clearly the responsibility of responding to the challenges posed by the perennial spread of HIV/AIDS does not rest solely on the shoulders of the government or the medical community, but on all sectors, including the private sector, NGOs, educational institutions and the media.

And yet a number of the above cited condoms and Valentine's closure to relieve the roadblocks for. For one, they illustrate the judgmental attitudes of the

(Continued on page 12)

MacArthur sought RP independence

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampio

THEODORE Agoncillo taught me to be a stickler of historical sources. His advice was to examine the sources—who is writing it and what is the purpose of the writing. Is it a memoir? Is it a newspaper? Is it official diary years later? Apocrifo and private correspondence was more reliable than public pronouncements as self-serving memoirs.

While reading Douglas MacArthur's "Reminiscences," I noticed he had forgotten his lines. However, there are some details on the same landing I hope to clear check with a Filipino source this, say, Sergio Osmeña or Carlos P. Romulo who was read on Leyte on this historic day 60 (now) ago.

MacArthur's memoirs refer to "daily to me" speech he broadcast to the people of the Philippines from Leyte. Reading the same text today makes people cringe because it sounds monotonous—and to make, domestic matter—(yes from the point of view of the author) unfolded incidents in Gil Presidente Roosevelt. Again the text is from his memoirs:

"Near Tacloban, Philippine Islands

"October 20, 1944

"Dear Mr. President,

"This note is written from the beach area Tacloban where we have just landed. It will be the first letter from the freed Philippines. I thought you might like to see your philatelic collection. I hope I am through.

"The opportunity is coming accurately and dramatically will accompany us well as our ability on the victory forces to me. Unescapable is still plague the country and the Japanese bombing along the coast of Sam from the Japanese homeland to the up of Singapore, and will enable us to envelop in the entire coast as we desire, it seems complete by the Japanese from their defensive propaganda machine of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Naturally it disturbs his forces in the Philippines at rear and by by passing the southern half of the Philippines will result in the saving of possibly fifty thousand American casualties. He had captured at and prepared for Mindanao.

"While we have in its critical of MacArthur's memoirs, I couldn't get over his recognition of Filipino independence and how he would help restore the Commonwealth government in the capitals of the provincial capitol days after the landing. Sergio Osmeña, according to this diary, was carpetbagged by this act, thinking the trip was largely ceremonial and he had to return to the Visayas of Samar to offer the photo opportunity in Leyte.

MacArthur did not consult with Washington on this point, causing a rift with Senator Brotherly Harold Ickes who wanted to take charge of the Philippines. Roosevelt told Ickes:

"It was his claim that the archipelago was a 'possession' of the United States and he wanted to think of the islands as another one of his fiefdoms. He began and before any landings in the Philippines, he had set up a civil affairs section charge as soon as we had completed the invasion. Most certainly he was opposed to giving the reins of government into the hands of President Osmeña and the regularly elected authorities."

It was also important that the Commonwealth government be soon set to reopen the schools from the withdrawal so that when they have to make the transition to a free and independent Philippines. That "he had been advised (who had been told and delayed so the United States during the period of the Japanese Occupation), and that he was going on to give the desired people for return."

And finally, MacArthur was another example part of our history—the collaborationist issue. MacArthur says that if Ickes had his way, then one of the many men who would be brought to room would be Manuel Roxas who became president in 1946.

Later memoirs what Ickes wrote in his diaries and other papers. There is much that has to be researched and reevaluated as we address the rewriting of our history textbooks.

Outsourcing: boon or bane? (2)

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

OUTSOURCING has been described as a sunshine industry in its otherwise bleak Philippine economy. Last week, in part 1 of this column, I described how outsourcing has offered by major outsourcing services commercial use by telecom companies in the Philippines—call centers, software development, medical transcription and cartoon animation.

But I warned, too, that if we are to reap the full potential of these outsourcing activities, we need to be more aware of the history of outsourcing, and its advantages and disadvantages.

Outsourcing is, after all, only the latest phase in the development of global expansion of the economy. Historically, we need to

look back at our experiences with the "runaway factories," mainly garments and electronics firms that came here in the 1970s because of removal of our export processing and industrial zones.

Yes, the products of these multinational firms are now among our leading export items. And yet, we did not, and continue to not, take advantage of this, choosing instead to be content with the low-wage, low-skill jobs we give our managers. Lagonoy's electronics firm can offer something like P10,000 a month to a factory worker. But the many young women from rural Southern Tagalog provinces who flock to Laguna, that is a windfall, enough to support parents and younger siblings.

But where's another side to this. These factories have in a sense walled local industries. Local textile and garments firms, for example, have been proactively wiped out, unable to compete with the multi-thousands, cotton-duty-free/duty-free import substitutions.

In the area of electronics, I always have mixed feelings seeing some gadgets sold in an American or Japanese store labelled "Assembled in the Philippines." Some "assembled," rather than "made in," Unlike Taiwan, South Korea and now, China and India, we've always been content to be global workers, doing the menial jobs of assembling different components, some produced in other Third World countries, to a finished product.

We succeeded these firms thinking of the jobs they'd create, but forget that capital moves fast to where the skills that are needed are cheapest and most docile. Set to relocate, as the multinational moves out of the Philippines to countries like China and Vietnam.

Hype versus realities

Never mind, we tell ourselves, we have a stable strike with call centers, because, together with India, we have the English proficiency and fairly high levels of formal education. Some of us however wanted to deliver many of the required outputs.

But there's a danger here that we become complacent, believing the hype in the mass media and in the hearings against about the supposed gains in outsourcing. Last month, I met executives of a call center in Ayala Center, Cebu, who had been sent to Manila from Pampanga, Santa Catalina, lured by the prospect of becoming a call center operator. And was working under two years of college courses in engineering and a six-month caregiver course after leaving about the seniors of this call center center, with salaries supposedly running up to $800 a month. Very much comical when you could translate that to?

Manila proved frustrating for Ana, with new rejection coming after another. Ana hadn't realized, as each many other call center hopefuls, that last most there were only about 25,000 jobs in the industry, and that the 2004 projections of 40,000 were the year, this to minimals compared with the number of job seekers. Outsourcing figures over a recent study by the Center's Federation of the Philippines finding that only two, or three out of 100 applicants qualified for call center jobs. The reason? We need not just good English skills, but "accent neutralization" "accent elimination" on you can be understood by those non-clients. It's not surprising many of those accepted come from the universities of the Philippines, Ateneo and other upper-class private schools.

And the salaries? P12,000 to P17,000 a month is a more realistic starting salary, sometime before that, don't please what a BP that's not any, but certainly a long way off from the $800 figure being touched around.

Learning from India

My fear is that we will again remain content as global outlets, displacing BP jobs from India to other cheaper jobs. Call centers moved to the Third World not just because our labor was cheaper but because languages and literacy among people were learning their jobs after some weeks, usually faster by the months.

But what we want to learn from the Indians, who are outsourcing as part of a larger industrial development plan. Whether call centers or software development, many of those outsourcing firms are situated in Bangalore, India's "Silicone Valley," where they become part of a larger plan to develop Indian's own information technology sector.

Many Indian companies have developed homegrown technologies for local needs. From hand-held to be used by farmers to computer technologies that electronically can transfer some $50 million dollars during times less electronic within a few days. Call centers, the Indians know, generate basic skills and experience that can be developed. Last year, their software exports totaled to $9.4 billion.

The Indians have a National Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) that is able to negotiate on the global market. When American policymakers began grumbling about how outsourcing was taking away jobs at home, Nasscom sent out studies showing outsourcing, the US economy would be to even more than already.

Nasscom continues studies of the world outsourcing market, trying to figure out what nations are available for India. Rather than falling threatened, for example, by China, a major competitor in many electronics manufacturing, Nasscom talks about joint ventures. Similarly, the Philippines is seen less as a threat than an opportunity with at least one Indian human resource company, Satyam, already investing in the Philippines' call center industry.

What are the lessons in approaches? India has always adopted a nationalistic but pragmatic stand to believe in industrial development, bringing in the Indians-trusts but negotiating with them with statesmen protection in mind. Left behind this thought many years ago when we invited in the runaway factories. It may not be too late yet when it comes to outsourcing.

Support Commodore Robles

LETTERS

ill an alumnus of the fraternal Delfinan College of the Philippines, I have a strong interest in the cleansing and strengthening of the fraternal fibers of the Philippines. This is my oath before God and our flag.

Therefore, I want my name publicly listed on the side of evading officer Commodore Boy Robles, whom I laud in his chance to personally blow during my stint at the Department of National Defense. I tell my "coat of duty" in the DND from 1983 until 1989, serving the nation under three defense secretaries—Juan Ponce Enrile, Rafael "Rocky" Ileto and Fidel V. Ramos, superiors with saw Executive Secretary Edcel du Dennis.

I remember Robles as a soft-spoken, too articulate man, and I have a high regard for him as a fine officer and a gentleman.

Likewise, I get the respect to do this in the Philippine Military Academy alumni who planned him to supreme their support for his cause; urging him to continue resisting what he knows about the corruption in the AFP. More should come out.

It is easier to fight in the battlefield than in the courtroom. What Robles is doing now is extremely difficult both for himself and for his family. But Saint Paul wrote in his epistle to the Christians in Ephesus: "Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead expose them." (Ephesians 5:11) That is one of our tasks as Christians. And this task is costly because the evil we face with do us less in new lies and instigators. But that is the price we have to pay when we face the enemy in the courtroom. It hardly happens in the battlefield. That is what makes Robles stand out above the rest of his peers. His mission is to strengthen the AFP.

I am confident that the AFP which is now in the "corrective care unit," will come out stronger and taller after this experience. After the "operation" to remove the tumor, we can be confident in the future of our armed forces. Thanks to a few officer like Robles.

I appeal to the men and women in uniform, to all Christians, and to all men and women of integrity and resolve, to pray for Robles and support him. Plies to newspapers and call the radio and television to express your support. Fear not. There is no need to launch another coup d'etat to counter the AFP. A coup is counterproductive. We will just be used as pawns by those who have hidden and evil agendas. Another coup will just wreak on the AFP to the delight of the communist terrorists who want to overthrow the republic, and who will always benefit from trouble and anarchy.

The active fight is in the courtroom, where Robles will be.

—RT. NOBLEZA L. MERCADO, MNSA, bishop and chief of staff, Philippine Missionary Army
love—mer@hl.yahoo.com

In the field of law, not activist law

IN RESPONSE to the news item "Outstanding women picked," (PDI, 10/06/04, Page A2), duty I point out that I was The Outstanding Women in the Success Service (TOWNS) award in the field of law, not service law.

I noticed that in the news item, the TOWNS awardees were identified by their profession (lie engineer, teacher, policewife, pose), but when it came to me, I was identified as an activist (correct instead of lawyer), unlike the rest. I just removed the disparity.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Hilario Davide chaired the board of judges which included former Foreign Secretary Delia Albert.

I've enclosed an embedded file of the curriculum vitae I submitted to TOWNS.

—MARICRIC LAMBINO
maric@ca.lambinolaw.edu.ph

On 'Asya': Correct errors

TITOSIR is furious. Even the greatest of sages committed some mistakes.

The tradition of the book 'Bagay, Kiyame, Hiyame at si Hinahanap' should correct their mistakes. They cited the Encyclopedia Britannica to defend this claim in the book: "the British know that the Chinese were fond of opium though it was illegal." I looked up the encyclopedia, and I found their examples twisted.

1. In late 18th century, the British attempted to commercialize their unfavorable China trade with traffic in Indian opium.

2. They shifted the opium here in Cities and gradually became addicted toward Chinese law and order in general, leading starting in mind but leading slowly.

3. (a). To this, imperial commissioner for anti-opium campaign destroyed 20,000 chests of opium, (the last to two opium wars. China lose the more-rich the version of Hong Kong and indemnity of $21,000,000.

We blamed our wars-long problems on some foreigners, including Chinese nationals. Shall we shall say "The Chinese know that the Filipinos were fond of shabu though it was illegal"?

—TEDDY BOY WOO
899 Baggio St., Sta. Cruz, Manila

Another 'Band-aid'

THE VEHICLE license plate was originally meant as a control mechanism in registering and identifying the number of vehicles allowed to ply public thoroughfares. The first three characters are letters, but the "O" and "I" are not used because they can be mistaken for numbers "0" and numbers "1." The first of the three letters identifies the region where a vehicle is registered. On the other hand, the last of the three numbers is on the right indicates the month when the vehicle's registration is to be renewed, and the middle numbers, the week of the month. Since the plate is issued sequentially and chronologically, it tells if the vehicle is newly registered or not.

But whenever a new president is elected, the design is always changed to reflect the personal preferences of the president. Remember how the jeeps falls and the cedula were reinvented? So has the original license plate and the license plate with the coming of the special, personalized and more costly plates. Anyone can get a plate of his personal choice of letters and numbers even ahead of the week and month when his vehicle can afford the price, plus the penalties.

But according to regulations of the Land Transportation Office, special license plates should not be displayed as the form of the vehicles, in addition to the regular plates. This means that the regular plates of the vehicles must be retained. So the special plates should only be fastened on the front or the bottom, at the left, or at the right of the regular plates. With these regulations, what is then the legal value of the additional special plates? The answer is nothing, but a mere symbol, distinguishing the rich from the poor.

What moral and social consistence does one have in displaying a plate worth P50,000 to P150,000 in the midst of the economic crisis and poverty in which most of our people are mired?

To justify, it is contended that the revenues from these expensive plates will help the government in overcoming the fiscal crisis. I disagree. The economic crisis is tremendous; it cannot be remedied with these ad-solutions such as the vanity plates, or by the so-called "liquidation or contingent fund," or by the food coupons.

—VICENTE BARCELARAN,
9410 Malo Road, Sat Jose, San Fernando City, Pampanga

Commendation, not condemnation

I did an affidavit of the Government Service insurance System and I with to take exception to the rumor (what, one-sided remarks than your columnist, Ramon J. Tuvalus, made in his column on) that "the cat is also a 'white man.'" (PDI, 10/03/04)

In essence, Pardon questioned the cat loan obtained by GSIS president Winston Garcia from the very institution he is managing, and he suggested in the process that the loan was obtained through undue influence. He also went so as urge President Macapagal-Arroyo to remove him from office.

I do not see anything illegal, irregular or even unethical with the cat loan obtained by Garcia. From what has been established in the records of the GSIS itself, the loan applications of Garcia complied with all the requirements and he has the capacity to pay for the loan from his salary. And Garcia borrowed from another government lending institution or a private bank, his application would have likewise been processed and approved with the same dispatch.

It must be emphasized that Garcia could have opted to just use any of the service cars of the GSIS and he would not have had to apply for a car loan at all. Instead of exercising this prerogative like most other government officials are inclined to do, he chose to pay for his own car, albeit by way of a loan. He ought to be commended rather than be condemned for what he did.

Moreover, Garcia should be commended for his decision to buy a Filipino car, albeit by way of a loan. He ought to be commended rather than be condemned for what he did.

—RUBEN S. SANTOS,
president,
National Organization of Professional Teachers Inc., Auditorial Capitol Region, Mirasol, Bureau, Sta. Grisa, Lapu-Lapu City

Garden in the city

BOUNDED by Mountain Street, Buena Boja Street and Buenal Nacion Street in Barangay San Lorenzo, Bago Bantay, Quezon City—almost opposite Ideal City North Edsa and adjacent to the office of the Department of Education—National Capital Region and the Division of City Schools, Quezon City—is a parcel of land which has been idle for decades. But recently trees were planted in the area. As shown by the many signs found, the place, which used to be the site of a military reservation, is under the jurisdiction of the Bases Conversion Development Authority.

Since Metro Manila is in dire need of green areas or so-called garden forests, may we suggest that this parcel of land be developed into an ecology park, with the trees there.

The metropolis is congested and polluted. It needs more breathing space. This area, within a commercial center, can serve the purpose well.

In this light, I propose that the BCDA, the National Parks Development Committee, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority and the Quezon City local government pool their resources and develop the area into a green park.

—ROBERT S. SANTOS,
president,
National Organization of Professional Teachers Inc., Auditorial Capitol Region, Mirasol, Bureau, Sta. Grisa, Lapu-Lapu City

Exorbitant 'just payments'

TOES is about the National Power Corp. and its sister corporation known as Transco (Transmission Corp.) and the graft and corruption being committed by leaders in connivance with cronies.

This is written in the meantime on exorbitant "just payments" for lands being expropriated for the right-of-way of transmission lines. Aside from that, farmlands are increasingly converted to residential lands to command higher market prices.

It is high time that the Department of Justice, Department of Energy, Ombudsman, Office of the Solicitor General and other investigative agencies of the government to investigate and stop these illegal and immoral practices.

—JOSE VILLAVERDE REYES,
97-A Kamuning Rd., Quezon City

InqBox
Question of the Week
Do you think something good will come out of the investigation of the alleged ill-gotten wealth of some AFP officials?
Senders of e-text & text messages published in Tuesday's InqBox will each receive an "Inquirer T-shirt!"
Key in: inquirer news space/city/message.
Text your answers to 2327 (Globe) or 283 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)

Across the NATION

Girl positive cultist killed Yongco

By Ramona Nepalidad
PhilStar Bureau

CEBU CITY—Three witnesses identified Michel Ferdis as the man whom they saw carrying a gun near the house of lawyer Aries Sia. Ana Feorgen as that time she was killed.

The trio testified yesterday from Supt. Salvador Manga, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Investigation Group in Central Visayas.

Mangas said the 18-year-old girl was the first to identify Ferdis past 10 p.m. on Wednesday night after he was turned over to the CIDG by the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

"Mas gasd na. Dhat si Inoy," Mangas quoted the girl as saying, after seeing Ferdis, who was in an adjacent room, through a one-way mirror on Wednesday night.

Mangas noted that the girl did not show any hesitation when she identified Ferdis.

In her affidavit, the girl said she was walking near Yongco's office in Barangay Zapatera to look for sunflower for her school requirement when she saw Ferdis at about 8:45 a.m. on Oct. 11.

She said the gunman pulled the gun tucked from his waist and went to Yongco's house. She said he even used the firearm to knock on the door.

Fear

Out of fear, she said she immediately went to Yongco's store and bought ice water. It was at this moment when she heard the gunshots.

When she went out of the store, the girl said she saw the man still holding the gun, get out of Yongco's office and walk toward a motorcycle parked near the entrance.

Mangas said four other witnesses went to the CIDG yesterday.

But only two were able to identify Ferdis as the armed man whom they saw near Yongco's office either before or after Yongco's killing.

The two other witnesses, however, were just cars, said Mangas who refused to name the witnesses for security reasons.

The CIDG filed murder complaint against Ferdis on Tuesday at the city prosecutor's office after three witnesses identified Ferdis as the gunman who shot and killed Yongco on Oct. 11 inside her office on the ground floor of her house in Barangay Zapatera this city.

Ferdis, however, showed up at the NBI office in Palawan on Tuesday to "clear" his name.

Supreme master

He was flown to Manila on Wednesday and was presented to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez in the afternoon, NBI officials in central Visayas in Cebu.

Ferdis is a member of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA) sect, "supreme master," Rufino Velez, stands trial for parricide, which Yongco was prosecuting. Velez is accused of killing his wife Alma Bautista Velez.

Ferdis denied killing Yongco. He said he was making a small boat in his home in Barangay Talisay, Carcar, on the island province of Palawan, in the morning that Yongco was killed.

In the afternoon of Oct. 11, he said he attended the noon Mass and soon watched the local boxing program.

But two new witnesses went to the CIDG office yesterday and said they saw Ferdis at least five times near Yongco's house a day before she was killed.

Mangas said the new witnesses went to his office after they saw Ferdis picture in the newspapers.

Cagayancillo Mayor Joel Cuevelo said the town's flores sino celebration last Sept. 18 while the coronation night was held on Sept. 19, the eve of the fiesta.

No record

Still he said he found it hard to believe that Ferdis could commit such a crime because he knew Pearl is very well and the suspect had no negative record in the town.

Cuevelo said Ferdis, both 40, are distant relatives and grew up together in Cagayancillo. Cuevelo hails from Barangay Santa Cruz and Ferdis, an adjacent village of Talaga.

The mayor said Ferdis ran for councilor under the ticket of the local opposition two years, but he lost.

Meanwhile, Mangas clarified that Ferdis was not detained at the CIDG office but was turned over to their custody. He added Ferdis even slept in one of the air-conditioned rooms at the CIDG 7th office.

The CIDG chief issued the clarification after Orlando Sabastadio, PBMA lawyer and chief counsel of Ferdis in the parricide case, said Ferdis could not be detained because the case was still pending at the prosecutor's office and no arrest warrant had been issued.

"We were not sought in the area or arrested by virtue of a warrant. You served him voluntarily gave up himself in order to clear his name," Sabastadio said.

Sabastadio however said that Ferdis wanted to remain under the custody of the authorities to ensure his safety but he could be released if he wanted to.

GenSan airport shuts off runway lights to cut costs

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Airport authorities here have decided to shut off the high intensity runway lights (HIRLs) at the General Santos City International Airport during a specific period in compliance with the government's cost-saving measures.

Nathaniel Hanawon, manager of the General Santos City International Airport (GSCIA), said executives from the HIRLs, which serve as guides for airline pilots performing landings, would only be switched on from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. starting Wednesday.

He said after 5 p.m., the HIRLs would be put off.

Aside from the HIRLs, Hanawon said they would also turn off the (GSCIA) light precision approach path indicators (PAPIs) during the said period as they could save more.

Like the HIRLs, the PAPIs are also important navigational instruments.

He said the HIRLs and PAPIs require a lot of energy and turning them off would help the airport limit its expenditures.

Nanawon said the cost-saving measure would not affect the operations of the airport because traffic is only heavy up to 5 p.m.

"The operation of these navigational equipment would be confined only during the period when there is heavy traffic," Nanawon said.

Nanawon said those opposing their move could always write to the Air Transportation Office (ATO) head office in Manila for reconsideration. —Agnilbo Pontis, PhilStar Mindanao Bureau

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Technology that Conquers Limitations

Benguet folk block mining air tunnels for workers

BAGUIO CITY—Residents of Bindakayan (seen in foreground) have opposed the activation of an exploratory tunnel that leads to an underground mining tunnel of Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corp., exposing the ire of 1,000 miners who need fresh air.

Bindakayan Councilor Florante Tindaoman said the town council could not sanction this issue, and has advised the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to issue a cease-and-desist order.

John Noveda, project manager of LCMC's Victoria Gold project and Teresa Ore project, said the exhaust cannot save many of the air-scrubbing equipment to clean underground mine air.

"We need to open the exhaust because it will expedite process, and fresh air to our miners and lower extremely high temperature underground to ambient temperature . . . . If we don't provide fresh air, no one is going to work there," he told a press conference here.

Lepanto is a key mine industry player, which draws P12.5 billion in revenues annually from contributes P600 million annually to the economy in taxes and downstream business opportunities and expenditures, Noveda said.

LCMC is undertaking prime gold and copper development projects that will last for another 20 years.

Last week, Philex obtained a permit to explore Benton Road and adjacent sections of Tuba, Benguet, for a proposed joint venture with international mining giant Anglo American, more than a year ago. Philex is also set to explore in Itogon, said Redemptus Ikchalo, Philex environment manager.

Noveda presented a petition signed by company workers, urging the Bindakayan government to intervene in endorsement of the resolutions submitted by barangay associations of Bindakayan and Ganduyan town in Ifugao bay.

LCMC opponents in Bindakayan, Buhallawan and Tuding said the pollution coming from the exhaust tunnel in the past had damaged vegetable plants, fruit trees and animals and might be the reason for the community's health problems.

Residents said the community might have attended mine-awareness seminars, but the exhaust tunnel is closed to smoke. "We never closed the air shaft [a pumped out of the mine] to supply the dust and carbon monoxide that is expelled. That is why there is mist," he said.

Andrino Dalawi, convenor of Bangguian dagiti Mannayon mga Dadakel (Bandem) and Tuding Bindakayan (Bintuyan), the exhaust tunnel was closed in 1997 because of barangay Bakencio's opposition.

Karen Mars, secretary general of Mankayan, Quezon, Indian, Cervantes Umiagamin Association (MACUBIA), and barangays affected by the LCMC mining operation had claimed that the reopening of the Teleng exhaust tunnel proposed by the community for the extraction of the underground tunnel's pillars.

Vincent Cabreza and Irene Calaoa, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Deadly virus stalks kids in Benguet

By Frank Cimaco
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Four children have died in nearby La Trinidad, Benguet, have died of infection caused by what doctors say a hot-acting virus in the past two months.

Dr. Antonio Bautista of the Department of Health's Cordillera epidemiology and surveillance unit called on the public not to panic so they can to link among the cases yet.

"But the fact that are usually have one to two cases every year but now we have seven means that we should be more cautious," Bautista said.

He said the first case was reported in March but they thought it was routine but to be safest in this month's probable mini-outbreak.

On Aug. 25, year-old Sheryl Pearn of Holy Ghost Extension died of meningococcemia. On Oct. 3, Marvelino Mariano, 17, of Barangay Upper Tawang, complained of fever and severe headache but died hours later after meningococcemia.

His friend, Neil Sarmiento of Upper Dominicain, died a day later of the same cause as the Baguio General Hospital would not talk it to bacterial meningitis, Bautista said.

On Oct. 3, Elsie Dipangol of Barangay Imam died of meningococcemia a few hours after she was admitted at BGH.

Three cases were reported in La Trinidad on Oct. 8 and Oct. 19. A two year-old boy was also reported to have died of meningococcemia on Oct. 19 while two others were confined at BGH after showing symptoms of the infection.

Bautista said meningococcemia is a fast-acting infection that can kill a patient, usually a child, in a few hours after infection starts.

The infection is caused by a bacteria known as *Neisseria meningitidis*, which is normally found in common throat disorders.

"It is when resistance to the bacteria is lowered that it can attack the body," he said.

Relative meningitis a dangerous one because it causes meningitis but because once it enters the bloodstream, it can attack the body and can result in kidney failure or death in a few hours, Bautista said.

He said the risk of dying from meningococcemia is high, 15 percent. In the United States, 40 percent of cases affect those below the age of 16.

"It is possible that Monday is a carrier," Bautista said.

Meningococcemia is transmitted by direct persons to person contact through respiratory secretions.

Bautista said they were looking at the home and school environment of the victims to see how they could have affected other people.

The infection in the body could be from three to seven days, he said.

MEN OF FAITH
Two Muslim worshippers walk to a mosque in Maguing, Lanao del Sur for prayers. Muslims are celebrating the holy month of Ramadan.

Local governments told to rely less on IRA, more on own revenues

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—At the local crisis debate the national government's budget cut, local government units are asked to rely more on themselves to fund their operations and projects.

Senator Francisco Pangilinan urges said local governments should learn to be more self-reliant by improving their local revenue collection and relying less on the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA), which is their share of the national revenue collection.

Drilon, who spoke here on the Oct. 21 opening of the Dinagyang of the Governance Expo 2004, a project of the Philippines Canada Local Governance Support Program (LGSP), said that mayors have always asked him for assistance for projects because they do not have sources of funds other than IRA.

He said that he was surprised to learn that even some progressive cities and provinces have been largely dependent on their IRA by 75 percent. Drilon said he would find out the sources of financing the delivery of services in these communities. Other towns and provinces were dependent on their IRA by as much as 60 to 100 percent.

Iloilo provincial administrator Manuel Mejaredo said Drilon's observation was true in many local government units. He said that Iloilo province was about 70 to 80 percent dependent on its IRA.

On the other hand, Iloilo City is about 86 percent dependent on the IRA, said Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas in an earlier interview.

However, the IRA, the lifeblood of many local government units, is also affected by delays in release and budget cuts in the past.

Renato Ilkananan, in her paper "Implications of Fiscal Problem on the IRA Allocation," available at the LGSP Expo, said that IRA's release has been "highly unpredictable."

He said that in the years 2000, 2001 and this year the mandated IRA share was not appropriated in full. In the years 1998 and 1999, IRA's release was not in full while in 1999 it was not released on time.

Manasan, who is connected with the Philippine Institute for Development Studies, said that even before the government has admitted that there was a fiscal crisis, IRA allocation has been cut by a total of P44 billion from 1998 to 2005. As a result, local governments units have been hearing the cases when IRA releases were delayed or not released in full.

With the proposed 25 percent cut in IRA by next year, Manasan said the local governments ability to deliver basic services would be seriously hampered.

In its digital presentation on government finance, the LGSP said that other than IRA, local governments can count on other revenue sources like taxes, fees and charges, fees from operating economic enterprises, grants and donations and credit financing. These sources are mandated by law. However, Local Government Code but many local government units have not tapped them.

Benguet judges to lose offices as more room sought for workers

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The provincial government is asking judges holding office at the capitol to move out to give more room to its employees.

The judges refuse to occupy a Justice Hall nearby, which was built by the Department of Justice in 2002 and which was completed by the Supreme Court.

Norma Carmona, clerk of court of La Trinidad's regional trial courts, said judges discovered that the Justice Hall is a security risk because their courtrooms actually face the dilapidated provincial jail.

"Any determined convict can take a swipe at them. (Their) forearms (for courts) were not considered when the DOJ constructed the building," she said.

Judges suggested in an August dialogue with provincial lawyers that capitol employees can move to the M. Bello Building instead, according to an Aug. 26 report filed by Atty. Ben Bautista, provincial legal officer.

Two regional trial courts occupy two floors of the provincial capitol, displacing officials of Benguet's budget and planning offices, according to Bautista's report.

On July 30, Jose Perez, Supreme Court deputy court administrator, advised the judges to move to the new building.

Transco president says local power cooperatives 'milking cows' of execs

LUCAP, CITY—The top official of the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) said majority of electric cooperatives (ECs) in the country were only being used as milking cows by the officers running them.

Alan Dela, Transco president and chief executive officer of Transco, said "majority of the local electric cooperatives are just being used as private savings bank of its owners and managers."

"They looted three-in-one and enriched themselves like the greeds," he said.

"Somebody has to say it and I am saying it now," he said.

He also added that local cooperatives have been having other illegal dealings with private consumers, making it a point that the results would be for their officers' personal advantage and gains.

Dela's statements came as members of the Albay Electric Cooperative (Aleco) blamed the National Electrification Administration (NEA) for the downfall of their cooperative.

Aleco was declared "dead" by former 1st Congressman Edcel Lagman and a congressional probe is now underway.

Lagman said after the three cooperatives (Aleco I, Aleco II and Aleco III) managers' effort to oppose their status from Category B to Category B, NEA again resolved for the re-merging of the three cooperatives in 1995.

Elbia Said Ilkanal core-ops Aleco employees for the cooperative's death.

"From this time on, no more fear of disconnection. Even Lagmans and a is the employees that shall be disconnected," he had said.

Elbia threw the ball to the people of Albay to decide for themselves on what to do with their electric cooperative. The former NEA administrator claimed that he was not sending hands this time, only that he wanted Albayanons to decide what they want to do with the electric cooperative.

But for Lagman, "It was NEA which plotted the death of cooperative in Aleco since it was during WEB watch that Aleco employees were exposed to corruption," Ronnie Lungo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

HEROES
Nurse nuns can't stop Deborah Sayo-Estoce (right) and Ortrude Bullecer (left) from delivering books to a school in Tanabo, Lanao del Sur. Estoce is project director of the Kalipunan ng mga Kaisang Bayan-Lideres Development Initiatives Inc. (Kaisahan-CDI) while Bullecer is the group's special projects director.

Del Rosario, King clinch WC berths

NBTC top Female bowler, Lita del Rosario, and veteran Chester King earned the right to represent the country in the World Cup international finals Wednesday by bagging the local ladies' and men's titles at Pasay's Eastwood Bowl.

Del Rosario whipped surprise finalist Apple Posadas, 2-1 (203-183, 181-192, 300-156), in the ladies' finals while King outstripped former Guamhalian, 2-1 (178-181, 223-200, 210-206), in the men's showdown.

Reigning World Cup champion CJ Isleta was knocked out by King, 2-1 (300-193, 164-211, 205-192), in the quarterfinals, while Jojo Catarin, who placed third in last year's international finals in Sapporo, Hokkaido, fell to Posadas, 0-2 (171-209, 195-203), in the semis.

Posadas and Catarin thus bet their respective chances to make their third straight international finals appearance.

Four-time World Cup champion Bong Hernandez handled his quarterfinals opponent, Builder Carreon, 3-1 (251-191, 198-194, 246-168), but was swept by Guamhalian, 0-2 (199-204, 194-218), in the semis.

Del Rosario advanced to the finals after knocking out Rinda Bernard, 2-0 (279-200, 211-166), and Ellen Ramos, 2-0 (203-186, 202-193), in the quarters and semis, while Nonalin began her sensational showing by upsetting Irene Ramirez, 2-1 (175-188, 172-188, 186-203), before beating Catarin.

King followed up his victories over Suarez with a 2-0 romp over Benny Oyco (207-106, 209-203) in the semis.

Catarin and Ramos gained the semifinals by topping Paulo Bernardino and Vilma Fabros, respectively. Catarin and Ramos won both by 2-0 scores.

The international finals is slated for 5-to-12 at Isabu Clubhouse in Telok Blangah, Singapore.

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OCT 24!

Palace forms new Cabinet 'superbody'

From page A1

ment papers, and the OEA would not duplicate the work of the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the National Anti-Poverty Commission which attend to the needs of the poor and marginalized sectors.

Concern for all sectors

"We're not just concerned with the poor, but virtually all sectors," Comendador said.

Comendador said the job of the OEA on the anti-government groups was "to win their souls."

Pantaleon said his office "absorbed" several left presidential advisers and assistants and their staff after the Office of the Presidential Advisers Assistants for Regional Development was abolished.

In addition, he said he would need another 58 of his own staff to deploy around the country.

"There is one of the smallest offices," he said.

Originally named Office of Commission on Affairs, the OEA's hierarchy was to "bring the government closer to the people and the people closer to the government," including groups hostile to the Arroyo administration, and to "build grass-roots support" for the government.

Dumping ground

The sources added the OEA had become the "dumping ground" of presidential appointees whose offices were recently abolished when the President began her reorganizing program.

"The President is abolishing agencies but she is also creating new ones whose function will only duplicate the work of the existing agencies," one Palace source observed.

But Pantaleon said the OEA, which was created only in August, was still in the process of organizing and had not received any budget yet. He said he was an ex-officio, saying the initial expenses for the work of his temporary "task force."

He denied he asked for P100 million, saying his proposed budget for the last two months of the year was only P5 million.

Pantaleon and Comendador said the OEA was patterned after U.S. President George W. Bush's Office for Faith-based and Community Initiatives.

Pantaleon said Bush's first act when he was elected 43rd president four years ago was to create this office to "demonstrate access" of nongovernment and people's organizations to government funding and assistance.

"The president's [Mrs Arroyo's] program is more expansive because the aim is not just to facilitate access to funds and programs but to engage these groups and help them so that we can also win them over to the government. It has really a very wide and daunting scope," Comendador said.

Accommodation

Pantaleon, former general manager of the National Housing Authority, was appointed presidential adviser for concerns/cities before his office was created.

Sources said the position was created to accommodate Pantaleon who lost his MMDA post as a consequence of Vice President Noli de Castro.

Mrs Arroyo created the Office of Consensus Affairs through Executive Order No. 349, dated Aug. 9. She issued EO 367 on Oct. 1, renaming the agency the Office of External Affairs.

Outside gov't machinery

"The office was renamed because we are operating outside the government machinery," Pantaleon explained.

In fact, the President said she needed the office to "address the objectives of the President toward the participation of the constituencies in the development and implementation of the administration's programs of government."

Its responsibilities were defined as to "liaison with constituency groups" and to "build grass-roots support for the administration's agenda and legislation."

The EO specifically contained the appointment of a "representative to the Office of External Affairs in the United States with the rank of attaché" and a head executive assistant to be appointed by the President.

Political attaché

Chosen for the overseas post was Consolacion, a protégé of the President who was formerly with the militant group Bayan in Central Luzon. He was also a former counselor in Angeles City.

Pantaleon said the OEA political attaché post was created to harness the help of some 3 million Filipino immigrants and expatriates in the US West Coast.

Comendador said Congress would be "operationally under the OEA but administratively under the Department of Foreign Affairs."

Comendador said the appointment of a political attaché for constituencies would not conflict with the work of the regular officers of the DFA and the Department of Labor in the country's various embassies and consulates abroad.

Pantaleon said Consolacion's post also would not conflict with the work of Vice President Noli de Castro, who was appointed presidential adviser for OFWs.

Increase remittances

Comendador said the OEA has the "skills to bring Bayan" which aims to encourage immigrant and expatriate Filipinos to invest in job-generating enterprises in their mother country.

There is also a "Dagdag Balde sa Pamilya, Bentahan sa Skonomiya" programs ask OFWs to increase their remittance to their families in the Philippines by $20 a month.

"Instead of buying Spam and cheese, we will ask them to send $20 more every month," Pantaleon said.

Instead of Spam

He said that, if 2 million OFWs increased their monthly remittance by $20, the would generate $40 million a month or P480 million a year boost to the Philippine economy.

Seven-point program

Dagdag Pabalo and Balik sa Isang Buong are just two of the seven-point programs mentioned by Pantaleon yesterday.

Pantaleon said the OEA was focused on helping realize at least four points of the 10-point agenda of the Arroyo administration, namely: attainment of a balanced budget by year 2010; termination of the hostilities involving rebel groups through the peace process; helping heal the wounds of Subic I, II and III; and ensuring more opportunities for livelihood projects.

Other programs

The other OEA programs include:

+ Bayang-bayi Program—is intended self-help and mutual-help and self-reliance through the mobilization of the productive capabilities of the constituents sectors to contribute to national goals, mainly by the grassroots' equity.

+ Pandong pinoy Pala Program—a modeling and showcasing program to prove that the best practices are feasible involving the piloting, nurturing and practice of models among communities, government agencies, local government units, groups and even individuals that are living examples that should be emulated.

+ Upuyan at Bahay-loan sa Barangay—a program aimed at demonstrating the excellent role of citizens of the countryside sectors to support programs and activities of the government, as well as private initiatives.

+ Isangpuso sa Bayan—a program that shall institutionalize a dialogue and feedback mechanism between the government and the constituent sectors.

+ A social marketing campaign to communicate and win over public support to the various policies and programs of government.

Values education

According to Pantaleon, a common feature of the OEA program components is that each of them involves values education and promotion anchored on participation, activism and consciousness involvement in nation-building.

"Rather than spend energy sulking and blaming the government for all the country's woes, I think our people was actually capable of facing up to the challenges if only we can engage and mobilize them in more productive undertakings," he said.

Back to basics menu for the hungry

From page A1

provided to the food coupon program the government hopes to implement next month.

Nine items—not 10, as she announced on Wednesday—make up the list: rice, cooking oil, mongo or other beans, eggs, dried fish, sugar, milk, cup noodles, and "fortified" or vitamin-enriched canned sardines.

What, no meat?

Soliman explained the combination may still vary or expand depending on the agricultural circumstances or the "culture" of the communities to be covered by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

4 factors

In a separate interview, Social Welfare Undersecretary Celia Yangco said that the agency considered four main factors in deciding which foods to include: They should be nutritious, locally manufactured, affordable and "acceptable" to all citizens, including Muslims who fast pork.

There may be areas, for example, where the people would prefer corn instead of rice as their staple, Yangco added.

Food for work, for school

Soliman also said the whole initiative would be officially called Food for Work, Food for School program.

In the Food for Work component to be launched Nov. 15, beneficiaries will be required to render community service in exchange for the coupons.

The recipient, to be selected in villages with high incidence of malnutrition, may swap the coupon for P1,200 worth of food stuff in government-accredited stores.

Monthly distribution

The coupons will be distributed monthly for three to six months, during which time the family breadwinner is expected to have already found a job or have started a small business.

The Food for School program will give one kilo of rice per pupil per day in schools with high dropout rates in Grades I and II. It will be implemented starting first week of November.

Gov't response

The DSWD is allotting P11 million for the program, which is the government's response to a recent Social Weather Stations Survey showing that more Filipinos are getting hungry.

PWEDE NANG MAG-BABOY ARAW-ARAW!

PMA alumni condemn graft in military

Front page 1

said to the vernacular, do not address the line but to contend with them to fill their top generals and to hundreds.

"That's what it is now," complete. While we in the field fight over limited supply of medicines and our families are miserable, they live luxurious lives. They can even send their children to the Private Schools," he said.

The angered and many soldiers like him were thinking of retiring from the service because they could no longer stomach the issues.

A Marine soldier was more con-

Front page 1

frontational. "It's better to shoot him," he said, referring to Garcia.

Plot demoralized, just hurt

But Gen. Narciso Abaya, Armed Forces of the Philippines chief of staff, said the 220,000-strong AFP was solid behind its leadership despite the wounded suggestion by the charges of corruption against Garcia.

"They [soldiers] are not demoralized. They are just hurt. By and large, the AFP is united and solid," he said yesterday in Zamboanga City.

He said he visited the Armies and Mindanao to assure the troops the military was serious against the alleged corruption about investigating its officials.

Garcia's classmate, Maj. Ralph Horca, is facing investigation for falsifying his bank data to extend his service years. Another classmate, Maj. Gen. Prospero Oreta, spokesman of the Philippine Air Force, is also facing investigation, but indictment officials have yet to reveal the charges against them.

The DFS/MAA, chaired by Ind Olanapar of PMA Class 1984, country more than 7,000 members, retired and active.

The group said it was supporting a speedy and impartial investigation of DMA graduates suspected of committing graft and corruption.

"What ask the proper authorities to open no-see to imposing appropriate sanctions against those who may be found guilty," it said.

PMAAA said that its alumni, who were trained in the ideals of courage, integrity and loyalty, should "render primacy service to our country and people."

"It is our responsibility as Philippines to maintain our integrity, be upright in our ways and long honor to our institution, our conscience and our families," the group further said.

Abaya, himself a member of PMA Class 1971, said that the graft cases against military officers should be pursued fully and that the accused officers should not be treated differently because they were honored with rank.

In Davao City, Maj. Gen. Samuel Rapsing said soldiers should concentrate on their mission against rebellion because the military has only two choices: being unconcerned with corruption.

During the send-off ceremony for the 2nd Special Forces Battalion, Rapsing, commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division based in Cagayan de Oro City, said those who are critical for the soldiers to be demoralized.

He said the fault of a particular military official was not the fault of the whole organization.

He said that if the allegations against Garcia were true, the money involved was not intended for those in the field.

"Our men in the field still get their rations on the money sent here came from somewhere else," Rapsing said. Reports from Agence Rapsa in Mindanao and Julie S. Alipala, and Anthony E. Alcaraz, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Wife deposits more dollars after US bust

Front page 1

Ombudsman records showed that on Jan. 14, 2004, Garcia's wife deposited $204,238, and the next day, $198,000 at a Citibank branch at One Park Avenue in New York City.

The Ombudsman records also showed that on Dec. 17, 2003, Garcia's wife declared upon entering the United States that she was carrying $100,000.

The records further indicated that on May 18, 2003, Garcia's wife entered the US carrying $40,000.

Under US laws, anyone entering the US in possession of over $10,000 must declare the money.

Brig. Gen. Garcia was a "passenger on the same flight" as his wife on Dec. 17, 2003, according to the records.

Asked by Rep. Rodolfo Gobio, chair of the House committee on national defense, to comment on this particular trip, Garcia invoked his right against self-incrimination.

But the general is willing to cooperate with Congress to produce the "letter" Antonio Trillanes, Rep. Robert Ace S. Barbers and Rep. Robert Jaworski Jr. on whether he was willing to help correct the supposed flaws in the AFP system, Rep. Gen. Carlos Garcia initially said he was not applying to be a state witness.

But when Jaworski repeated his question, Garcia quickly replied, "To testify for the betterment of the AFP I'm willing, you know."

Garcia said he left before yesterday than when he first showed up at the public hearings being conducted by the House committee on national defense and security headed by the alleged corruption in the military.

The lawmakers present appointed his comrades in questioning Garcia, former AFP comptroller and Col. George Rabusa, another officer accused of unexplained wealth.

Rabusa, who served as Garcia's chief of planning, programming and budgeting (J-8) for almost a year, said the issue of his supposed unexplainable assets was resolved by the Office of the Ombudsman years ago.

Garcia reiterated his position that there was no reason for him to apply as a state witness, as had been suggested by some congressmen, because he had nothing to testify about.

He said that the reform program started by the AFP since "practically very well," and that he hoped these efforts would succeed because he was not lying now.

AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya, who will retire from the military service next week, was not present at the hearing because he was bidding goodbye to the troops in the field.

He was represented by the AFP vice chief of staff, Vice Adm. Antonio de la Ossa.

Termites

Told by Gobio that the records of the retired Army Brigade had by Col. Emmanuel Custodio vanished because of termites, Garcia said: "I don't have a view on what happened in relation to it."

Gobio said the 5,000,000 records stored in the camp confiscated last December from Garcia's own were by 10 separate authorities could have been destroyed by huge numbers for at least two Army brigades.

"[Captain] are referring to your case, General Garcia," Gobio said, "You are not authorized by his statement, about the records in the AFP. How do you feel about that? You might feel anything that the 5,000,000 would have been enough for boots for four brigades?"

Garcia calmly replied: "I agree with your sentiments of compassion, your honor."

Rabusa's defense

Grilled by Gobio on his assets, Rabusa said the controversial had been triggered by an anonymous letter.

Nevertheless, he said, there was nothing irregular in his acquisition of a 240-square-meter property worth P4.4 million and located at the AFP Officers Village Association Inc. in Fort Bonifacio. He said he bought it with loans from the AFP Savings and Loans Association Inc.

Rabusa said he had no more deposits with the AFPSLAI.

But Gobio insisted that the colonel's wife, Debbie Rabusa, still maintained an account there such that Rabusa should have declared it in his statement of assets and liabilities.

On his property in Bulan Living, Davao del Sur, Rabusa explained that this was funded by loans he had obtained from the Land Bank of the Philippines.

In the case of the property in 94 Ave. Rhoads, he said he had been owned by his father-in-law long before he and his wife got married.

Rabusa also said his functions as chief of the then-living group under J-8 did not involve procurement of supplies for field personnel.

Family information

Gobio tried but failed to get information from Garcia on the conflicting P100,000 in cash as well as the whereabouts of his family members.

Garcia said he was not answering any more questions because his answers would be self-incriminatory.

Asked where his wife and sons were, Garcia invoked his right to privacy. He said there was no point in mentioning his children's names in the House investigation because he was not the alleged corruption in the AFP.

But Gobio proceeded to tell the assembly that Garcia's son and his fiancé Sharon married before his two sons were caught by immigration officials at the airport.

He said he had received reports that Garcia was also carrying $100,000 in cash on that trip.

Garcia was also asked about the reported robbery at his house in Camp Aguinaldo on Sept. 14, wherein he supposedly lost P1.8 million.

He denied that such an incident was missing, and said only his wife's wedding ring, watch and wallet with several credit cards were among the items taken away.

He said he reported the incident to the AFP and it was still being investigated by the Office of the camp commander.

Asked by Jaworski whether the burglary never after previous documents, Garcia said all his papers were intact.

"No, ma'am, Jaworski," Jaworski said. "We have so much military intelligence, yet a group of guys robbed [him] month has passed, and yet no information? I hope this is not a reflection of the situation in the war zone area."

Reyes owns cock farm in Parañaque

Front page 1

From the street you're not a landscape of small grain-colored structures housing some 70 roosters, another dozen roosters and hens roamed the fenced, grassy lawn.

A media-colored barn hangs as was pushed beneath a round, **elevated concrete pavilion.**

Confirmation

An official in the soldiers' assets administration office confirmed that the lot belonged to Reyes.

"One month here close Simon del Reyes is the owner but we were informed that it was his subdivision," the Mount-wide official said.

The official, who asked notes be named, said Reyes had been going to the barn since 1998.

He said Reyes' mother also owns a ranch "engineering long for what?—at home since months."

Reyes' spokesperson said the secretary was in Geneva and could not be reached.

According to the Mount-wide official, the subdivision that is the farm were confiscated year by Reyes' wife, Teresita.

He said the cock farm was started sometime in 1998 or 1999.

"It started as small-scale, just about a dozen head," the official said.

Reyes declared a total net worth of P1.8 million last year. His statement of assets and liabilities also listed lots in San Juan, Bel Residences and Parañaque among his real estate holdings.

He also reported his car assets as having increased from P4.8 million in 2002 to P5.3 million in 2003, from investments in commercial in Indonesia and Manila.

The cock farm was not reflected in the 2003 SAL.

Col. Felipe Tabas

The Mount-wide official said a Col. Felipe Tabas visited the subdivision office sometime last year to ask that the cock farm be included in the region portfolio.

He said that Tabas gave him the impression that the cock farm was only a branch of another cock farm in Antipolo.

Tabas, a 1976 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy, served as chief of the Logistics Command when Reyes was detailed there chief of staff from 1999 to March 2001.

Tabas was removed from the logistics committee in 2001, reportedly over a disagreement with him. Recently, Villanueva also had replaced Reyes as AFP chief.

Tabas has since been been assigned to the 5th Infantry Division in Central Mindanao.

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* ASEAN or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations consists of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

P52M still in Garcia accounts, says SolGen

From page A1

day after Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said that all the bank accounts of Garcia, his wife and their children had been closed days before the appellate court ordered the freeze order.

Makabulong said the case against Garcia was not lost even if his bank accounts had reportedly been found empty.

"There is no such thing as a perfect crime in these matters, and the paper trail will be meticulously investigated," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, spokesperson of President Macapagal-Arroyo, said in a statement.

"In accordance, the government will track down all the documents and evidence needed to build an airtight case," he said.

Explaining Makabulong's new hardline stance, Bunye said: "Nobody should ever doubt the political will of the administration to bring grafters to justice and to redeem what had been stolen from the public coffers."

The Court of Appeals on Oct. 19 froze the Garcias' 40 accounts in six banks, a savings and loan association "until all related suits are settled."

The freeze order covered seven accounts at branches of Land Bank of the Philippines in Greenhills and Camp Aguinaldo, 12 accounts at Allied Banking Corp., one account at Banco de Oro Universal Bank, two accounts at Bank of the Philippine Islands, eight accounts at United Coconut Planters Bank, six accounts at Planters Development Bank, and four at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Savings and Loan Association Inc.

Biggest dollar account

Records used the orders from the five banks showed that a total of $728,066.52 in dollar accounts and P11,439,302.81 in peso accounts had been frozen.

In one bank, the Allied, had $53,779.20 in dollar accounts and P39,224.93 in peso accounts. In another one, they only had $8.69 and P2,725.06.

One bank reported dollar accounts totalling a total of $654,286.43 while another reported peso accounts with a total of P6,040,453.19, according to Bunye.

The remaining two banks had peso accounts—one contained P4,736,380.3 while the other had P8,721.46.

After a few days, we'll know the status of the accounts in the Orient or her banks," he added.

List of real estate

While their financial assets could be scrutinized, the process of real estate of the Garcias cannot be moved. And the list of their other assets in the Visayas alone is growing.

Property worth P16.4 million has been found in Iloilo and Guimaras provinces.

There include six parcels of land totaling 69,811 square meters.

Parcels of land worth at least P10,915,819 were registered in the names of Garcia's sons Ian Carl, 26; Juan Paulo, 25, and Timothy Mark, 23. These are now the subject of investigation by the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

In separate letters to the registrars of deeds of the city and province of Iloilo, Col. Temelkaro Bunay, deputy chief of the AFP Office of Judicial Mandards and Public Accountability, requested records of real estates owned by Garcia and his wife Clarita Delabahite-Garcia. Clarita is from Barangay Cuatro, 42 km northeast of Roxas City.

Lifestyle check

In his letters dated Sept. 23, Bunay said the request was part of the "ongoing lifestyle check on AFP officers and men" conducted by his office.

Part of the real estate of the Garcias are three parcels of land in Barangay Palaro, Bamarigan, where the family-owned farm resort, UT Rancheria, is located.

The three-hectare resort, touted as the first of its kind in Western Visayas, includes a fishing lagoon, swimming pools, a children's playground and picnic areas. It also has camping grounds, an aviary, butterfly farm, mango-packing grounds, function rooms and native-style cottages.

The resort sits on three parcels of land registered to the Garcia couple and their sons, according to records of the provincial assessor's office and the Iloilo and Guimaras registry of deeds.

A 399-sq.m. lot with Transfer Certificate of Title No. 178418 dated March 2, 1998 is registered to Carlos S. Garcia. It is classified as a residential lot with a market value of P399,800. An adjacent lot with TCT No. T-178811 dated March 13 1998 is registered to Garcia's eldest son Ian Carl. The 1,344-sq.m. residential lot has a market value of P891,840. The biggest lot, 35,388 sq.m., with TCT No. T-178812 dated Aug.25, 1998, is registered to his three sons. It has a market value of P1,861,890.

The family also owns the UT Mango Orchard Inc., which is inside the resort, and the UT International Career Center Inc. in Barangay Tabuc Suba, Jaro district in Iloilo City.

The brochure also says a 15,321-sq.m. lot in Barangay Cansaga in Leganes town, 14.9 km north of the city. It was registered on April 23, 2003 with TCT No. T-195789 and has a market value of P459,618.

Guimaras property

On the island province of Guimaras, two pieces of real estate are in the name of Clarita.

One is a 13,558-sq.m. lot in Barangay La Paz in Nueva Valencia town. The property, formerly owned by the estate of the late Estrella Gonzalo and Soterra Gonzalo, was registered on March 5, 2003 with TCT No. T-201463.

The other property is a 5,000-sq.m. lot in Barangay San Miguel in Jordan town. It was registered on July 8, 1999 with TCT No. T-171877.

Records of the Iloilo City Assessor Office (CAO) showed that the lot where the Garcia residence is located at 46 A Lacson Subdivision in Jaro district is registered under the name of Clarita's father Quilino Depalubtub. The two-story house and lot has a market value of P188,028, according to the CAO Property Record Form.

The source of funding for the resort had attracted suspicion among Democrats residents even before reports of Garcia's alleged ill-gotten wealth became public.

Clarita's family is among the prominent families in the municipality. They own a hotel and have members working abroad, according to a Democrat resident.

In told the Depalubtubs that was also "suspected" in the coup. Asked who funded the UT Rancheria resort, he said, "They are rich but not that rich."

A source official who asked not to be named said the construction of the resort was completed in just a year. "It shows that the owner had a large amount of funds," he said. With a report from Juliet Labog-Zurbano in Iloilo

Leave it to couples, GMA tells big business

From page A1

"We are not closing our eyes on the issue of population growth, but we are not engaging the issue of what device should be used or not," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said in a statement.

Signatories

Bunye said the success of the population control program did not rest mainly "on the confidential methods employed by couples but on an aggressive [information] campaign and the active participation of the local government units and other sectors concerned down to the barangay level."

He said the Arroyo administration itself was "aggressively" implementing an information drive on responsible parenthood.

In their letter to Ms Arroyo, Juliano Zubel de Ayala, head of the Ayala conglomerate, Oscar Lopez, chair of the Lopez group of companies, former Cabinet members and other business leaders called for "greater assistance" to couples who wish to practice birth control. They also asked that pure condoms be granted greater access to "all legally and medically permissible goods and services."

Boxes of contraceptives

In response, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said office officials showed reporters huge boxes of contraceptive pills at a DOH warehouse in Tayuman, Manila. They said the stocks of contraceptives were ready for release to local governments and many supplies were running.

In a statement, the DOH said it had P533 million worth of contraceptives—enough to last till the middle of next year. This does not include some 240,000 vials of injectable contraceptives donated by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UN Population Fund, the statement added.

The DOH largely leaves it to local governments to distribute contraceptives. But some local officials who are close to the Catholic Church have barred their health units from distributing these contraceptives.

"We are promoting natural family planning but we recognize all methods," Dayrit said at a press conference. "We have not stopped procuring contraceptives [but] what the government wants to promote is responsible parenthood."

The DOH stocks of contraceptives were donated by international agencies. The USAID, however, said it would cut by two-thirds its donation of contraceptives by 2007. The agency delivered the last batch of its condom donations early this year.

"The remaining donations would be for the really poor," Dayrit said.

No gov't purchases

The health secretary reiterated that the national government would not spend its own money to purchase contraceptives despite calls from reproductive health advocates.

"Via government, to my knowledge, has never bought contraceptives since the 1970s. They were all donations, so the effort is a trade-off of priorities. The policies were: Sorry, but there is a threat of scarcity people are looking into it," Dayrit said.

Dayrit cited as donations of contraceptives would force local governments, who are left to chase up their own population programs and policies, to spend for whatever funds can be mustered to purchase supplies.

For her part, a consultant of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday urged businessmen to provide jobs to the "vibrant population" instead of urging the government to manage the country's population growth.

Archbishop, executive secretary of the CBCP-Legal affairs and consultant of the Episcopal commission on family and life, reiterated the Church's stand that what the country needed was economic management, not population control.

No population problem

"There is no population problem. We have a healthy population growth for purposes of replacing the aged. In this country," Bishop told the business in a phone interview.

"What we'd like . . . is for the business community to create jobs for the working population. We have young people who are diligent, educated, can speak good English, and they are just being taken away by opportunities abroad," she said.

Bishop rebutted charges that Ms Arroyo was doing little about the population explosion because of her fear of the Church, which has been known to campaign against officials promoting artificial contraception.

"The President is intelligent. She knows her convictions. She makes decisions based on her response, intelligence and faith. She is a Catholic, and she's putting it into practice," she said.

"That's what our resources and responsibilities are," Bishop added.

Business leaders lauded

Senate President Pro Tempore Francisco Tatad, however, lauded the country's business leaders for pushing for an active population control policy by the Arroyo administration.

Tatad, a former health secretary who got into trouble with the Church for vigorously implementing the family planning program, said the business leaders understood the ramifications of the country's rapid population growth.

"But now they see what's going on, that we have not balanced our numbers with our resources," he said.

Other senators were more supportive of the Church position on the issue.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who describes himself as pro-life, voiced support for the call made by the businessmen, but said the family planning method should be left to the discretion of couples.

Magsaysay said he did not think that the Church was "pressing its way" on the matter.

Policy of foreign nations

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that he agreed with Mr Arroyo's stand that there was no way for the country to adopt the population control policies of foreign nations.

"I think we should establish our own population control policy in consultation with the Church and also with the families, as provided in the Constitution," Pimentel said. With reports from Christina O. Avendaño and AFP

8 top generals eyed . . .

From page A1

some D-111, Brig. Gen. Jose Angel Honrado, assistant to the deputy chief of staff for CMO (J-7), and Col. Clarkiel Aguilar, assistant to the Judge Advocate General.

Adan said these officials were short listed based on experience, education, judicial temperament and professional reputation. He said they would also try Maj. Gen. Rolph Ilio, as for falsifying his birthday to extend his service years.

Garcia will be tried for at least three violations of the Articles of War—No. 95, in favor against the government; No. 96, or conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman; and No. 97, or neglect and disorder to the prejudice of good order and military discipline.

The military had earlier said that with Garcia's retirement on Nov. 18, the violations of Articles 96 and 97 would no longer be applied because he would then be considered a civilian and outside military jurisdiction. But AFP officials, citing past jurisprudence, said they could try and convict Garcia for violation of Article 95 even after his retirement.

Both Garcia and Ilio are 1971 graduates of the Philippine Military Academy. Nine of the short-listed officials are in that class.

Tesalona, Herson and Honrado are members of PMA '72, and Cabahug'on, of PMA '73. Cabuay, Vargas and Buenaldo were commissioned directly into the military.

Court-martial rules

Under the rules, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya has the sole power to convene the court-martial and convene proceedings against any officer.

The office of the Judge Advocate General conducts a pre-trial investigation of the officer's case prior to court-martial proceedings. The JAG submits his recommendations to the chief of staff.

"We are now investigating and gathering evidence against these senior officials, and the Judge Advocate General will eventually evaluate this [evidence]," Adan said.

He said the JAG was still determining whether other senior officials would be subjected to the court-martial. But he did not name them.

Only seven officials will compose the court-martial for each case. But if the soldier charged sees his right to peremptory challenge, as in the case of the Magdalo coup leaders, any of the seven can be removed and replaced.

An officer is tried by a set of officers senior or equal to rank.

Garcia's cases are initiated by the AFP's Office of Ethical Standards and Public Accountability headed by the vice chief of staff. The incumbent is Vice Adm. Antonio de los Reyes, all six members of PMA '71.

The AFP's Inspector General headed by Brig. Gen. Edwin Gadiane, another member of PMA '71, reviews and investigates cases involving operational matters and other violations.

Honor' case, as well as that of Brig. Gen. Ferdinand Buenaobra of the Air Force, is being investigated by Gadiane's office.

The military leadership recently announced that Ocampo, yet another member of PMA '71, had been put under investigation. But no details were given. With a report from Juliet Labog-Zurbano

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor Raul G. Manalo
Assistant Editor Carole S. Hartano

BSP sees October inflation at 6.9-7.4%

By Gavin C. Dumlao

THE INFLATION rate in October is expected to come in at 6.9-7.4 percent, the highest in more than five years, due to rising oil prices, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said.

Inflation in the year through September reached 6.0 percent. The National Statistics Office is scheduled to release the October inflation data on Nov. 5.

In a press briefing yesterday, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the projection was based on the 1994 consumer price index.

Crude oil prices reached $55 a barrel during the month, the highest level seen since the first Gulf war.

The increases in oil prices have also been putting pressure on the peso-dollar exchange rate, with the peso hitting the all-time low of P56.85:$1 in several weeks.

Buenaventura said the BSP had already considered the soaring cost of oil and its impact on prices of basic commodities in its inflation targets until June next year.

He said the BSP had not seen any second-round inflationary pressures, such as those arising from wage adjustments.

The BSP has conceded that the 4.5 percent inflation target for this year and next year is no longer realistic due to the rising world market prices of oil.

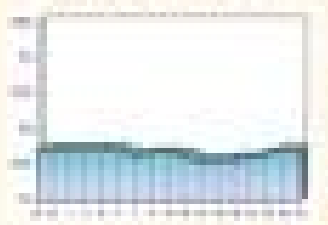
Assuming that inflation during the remaining months of the year would average at 7.2 percent, Buenaventura said the year-end average would be 5.4 percent, higher than the target.

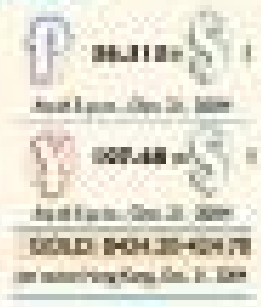
The BSP chief said the inflation was limited to be driven by supply factors that were likely to be short-lived.

"Inflation, which is expected to be higher than 4.5 percent for 2004 and 2005, is expected to return to the 4-5 percent range in 2006," Buenaventura said.

Under the inflation-targeting approach to monetary management, the BSP may be excused from overshooting its targets if the reasons were beyond the influence of monetary policy. Among the "escape" factors are volatility in the prices of agricultural products; natural calamities or any events that affect a major part of the economy; volatility in the prices of oil and oil products; and changes in government administration or policy measures that directly affect prices.

CURRENCIES





STOCK MARKET

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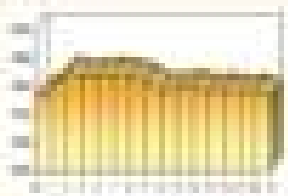

FBDC ordered to pay ₱1.07B in back taxes

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

CONSTRUCTION workers work overtime at the site of Mall of Asia, the country's biggest shopping center, near Manila Bay. The property market, which crumbled during the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s, has been showing signs of recovery, but rising oil prices are threatening the otherwise bright prospects as the costs of construction materials soar. REUTERS

DOHA ROUND

Conclusion of WTO talks seen by '06

By Ronnel W. Domingo

WHILE trade negotiations between countries were "intensifying," the conclusion of the latest round of talks under the World Trade Organization might not come earlier than 2006.

This according to WTO deputy director general Rufus B. Yerxa, who was attending the two-day "Business for Development" forum at the Philippine Trade Training Center, which will conclude today.

"The Doha Round would not be concluded this year," Yerxa said.

"We don't know if it would be finished in the mid-ministerial conference I in Hong Kong in December 2005, but there will be a strong desire to achieve that next year," he added.

Yerxa is taking part in the forum that gathers 43 delegates from business and government of 10 countries.

The delegates will tackle the challenges and options following the adoption of the so-called WTO July package.

The package resulted from negotiations aimed at meeting the deadline of July 31, 2004, to put the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations back on track.

This agreement sets out the general framework for continuing negotiations in agriculture, nonagricultural market access, development, services and trade facilitation.

Yerxa said the previous Uruguay Round took eight years to conclude and it was likely that the Doha Round, which started in November 2001 in Qatar, would also take that long.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round resulted in the adoption of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the creation of the WTO, which the Philippines became ratified in 1995.

Doha Round negotiations suffered a setback when the fifth ministerial conference at Cancun, Mexico, collapsed in September last year.

But "more and more" trade arrangements were being held in favors before the WTO is launched and this indicated that their promise was intensifying, he said.

In June, the Asian Development Bank said a new round of talks among WTO members was vital to the development of economies in Asia and the Pacific.

ADB vice president Guntur Sugiyarto Lindon said a successful conclusion to the Doha Round would also play a key role in poverty reduction in the region.

"Trade is the catalyst for sustaining macroeconomic reforms and adoption of new technologies that are essential for sustainable improvements in productivity," Van der Lindon said.

Subic exports hit $558M as of Sept.

SEMI-WIRE demand for computers and other electronics products boosted exports from the Subic freeport by 14 percent in the first nine months of the year.

The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority reported that exports hit $558 million as of end-September, up from $491 million posted in the same period last year.

Alfredo C. Antonio, the newly installed administrator of the SBMA, said in a statement that exports from Subic remained strong despite the slight fall in shipments of electronic products.

"We are confident that export performance would remain steady for the rest of the year," Antonio said.

Data from the One-Stop Export Documentation Center-Subic (OSEDC) showed that the highest single-month exports came in May, when exports reached $89 million.

From January to September, Whitco Electronics remained the top exporter, posting export sales of $204 million or 69 percent of the total.

Shipments from the Taiwanese firm surpassed by 28 percent its export earnings of $208 million recorded in the same period last year.

A subsidiary of Asus Computers, Whitco makes laptop computers, motherboards and peripherals, fax machines, integrated circuits, microthermistors and enhancer for the brands Asus, Intel and Hitachi.

Electric machinery and appliances maker Sanyo Eraki was the second-largest exporter with shipments valued at $58 million.

Top Mechatronics Corp., the maker of automated teller machine units formerly known as Omron Corp., placed third with $29 million worth of exports.

Japanese wood processing firm Asian Images (Philippines) ranked fourth, with $14 million worth of exported products, while air-conditioner maker Taiwan Hitachi Subic Inc. was fifth with $8 million.

Increased export earnings was also observed in the non-electronic value-added sectors, such as processed wood, high-end garments, jewelry and aircraft production. — Ronnel W. Domingo

FBDC . . .

From page B1

ed that that deed of absolute sale with quitclaim entered into by the government and FBDC in 1993 was covered by DST and that there was no clear exemption granted by Congress.

"Taxation is the rule and exemption is the exception. The law does not look with favor on tax exemptions and he who seeks to be thus privileged must justify it by words in the law too categorical to be misinterpreted," the CA said.

The CA also bemoaned that the "protracted litigation" of the case which began in 1999 "could have been avoided had (PSBC) realized the nature of the tax levied on it."

FBDC claimed that the Court of Tax Appeals had erred in its ruling because the Bataan Resthouse deal was covered by a special patent issued by the government that exempted it from Sec. 196 of the old National Internal Revenue Code's, the law requires the proceeds from the sale of military camps from all forms of taxes and fees, the firm was a government unit not a private entity being a wholly-owned by the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

The CA, however, ruled that the special patent issued by the government on the deal was simply intended to facilitate the registration of the property and that the DST was imposed not on the patent but on the deed of absolute sale.

The CA also noted that the proceeds from the sale of the military camps were meant to be the remainder of the purchase price after deducting all expenses related to the sale including taxes such as the DST.

The CA, likewise, rejected FBDC's argument that it was exempted because it was a government subsidiary to said: "The SOBC does not exempt government-owned and controlled corporations and their subsidiaries from the payment of DST."

Not even the warrant issued by the Bataan administration did not make the deal tax exempt because Executive Secretary Ruben Ongpin and former President Fidel Ramos had the authority to issue such a tax perk.

"By no stretch of the imagination can such warrant be interpreted as granting an exemption to petitioner from any form of tax. The power to tax and to grant tax exemptions is vested in Congress. Tax exemptions should not be lightly extended since they will represent a loss of revenue to the government," the CA said.

The CA said that the sum of the P71.227 billion purchase price for FBDC went to the specified beneficiaries of the BCDA proceeds such as financing the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, infrastructure development of former US military bases, and the National Shelter Program. "Based on the evidence adduced by petitioner itself, the BCDA assigned the entire purchase price of P71.227 billion to FBDC as payment for the former's subscription with the latter," the CA said.

EU carriers want more flights to RP

By Clarissa S. Baldos

EUROPEAN carriers are courting interests in the Philippines and are asking the government to allow them to fly more frequently to Manila despite overriding concerns on environmental investment in the country.

KLM Royal Dutch Airlines officials yesterday said that they would ask the government to grant them additional multi-frequencies so they could fly daily from Manila to Amsterdam instead of the five times weekly schedule.

"The Philippines market is growing, and we see enormous growth in both inbound and outbound traffic," said KLM executive vice president Dirk Gorgenlander. "We hope the government would grant us additional entitlements."

In 1998, there were eight airlines serving the Manila-Europe route aside from the Philippine Airlines. Today, the only one left on the Paris, KLM and Lufthansa, and they fly less than 10 times weekly. It was only a few European cities. The Manila-Europe route, according to sources, was taken over by Middle East carriers that were granted both entitlements and were able to offer cheaper rates.

Still, KLM's swap with Air France Jet Mix, the Manila-to-Paris stop may have to be scrapped in favor of more frequent Manila to Amsterdam flights.

Officials of the two carriers assured their companies would try to hold off rather than consider to air fares despite continued price hikes in aviation fuel. Both carriers sought an additional 20 to 25 cents or P1,462.140 to P1,744.50, in fuel surcharge for their flights from Manila.

Air France and KLM hope to introduce a non-stop flight to Europe starting Nov. 1. Gorgenvetch said KLM had dedicated one 227-seater Boeing 777.

DISCLOSURES

A. SORIANO Corp. 5,351,000 shares were recently bought by its wholly owned subsidiary, Anscor Consolidated Corp.

ABOITIZ Transport Inc. will hold a special stockholders' meeting on Dec. 6, 10 a.m. at the 2/F Lounge, 4/F of JEI Building, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of Nov. 4 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

PREMIERE Entertainment Production Inc. (PEP) said that its share swap agreement with shareholders of Next Media Inc. (NMI) last March 8 will be terminated, effect tax-free as intended because until now no shares have been issued by PEP and NMI shareholders to each other.

ABOITIZ of **Philippine Estates Corp.**'s audit committee are Ashton Lopez, Yolanda dela Cruz, Angel Emali and Eve Ina Gatmaitan. Nomination committee members are Pamela Magsaka, Lizzette Morales and Gatmaitan while nomination committee members are Ashton Lopez and Kenneth Hartmann. **Compiled by Marivic P. Felicia, PDI Research**

14 Japanese firms seen vying for Napocor assets

By Abigail L. Ho

FUKUSHIMA: Japanese firms have expressed strong interest in bidding for some of the country's power assets, including some of National Power Corp.'s generation plants and geothermal area being auctioned off under the Government Bidding Board (GovBoard 11).

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez revealed this after attending the 35th Joint Meeting between the Japan-Philippines Economic Cooperation Committee and the Philippines-Japan Economic Cooperation Committee in Japan.

Present in the meeting were Japanese and Filipino businessmen, diplomats and senior government officials. The meeting aimed to further enhance bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

Of the 14 Japanese firms that expressed interest in some of the country's power assets, Perez said 11 wanted to participate in the auction for Napocor's power plants or generation units (general).

He, however, declined to identify the prospective bidders. Some of the names that had come up in the past included Marubeni Corp., Mitsubishi Corp., Kanematsu Corp., Chubu Electric Power Co. and Sumitomo Corp.

Many of the Japanese firms are reported to be for the Sabangan (MW) Mainline coal-fired power plant in Zambales, the first big Napocor genco that the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) will be bidding out.

The bidding for the plant was scheduled for Nov. 24.

PSALM has so far privatized four of 10 Napocor gencos, all hydroelectric, that have been identified for privatization. Those included the 3.5-MW Tabuan plant in Davao, the 3.4-MW Agusan plant in Bukidnon, the 1.6-MW Bacon plant in Gamu-Iriga City, and the 6.4-MW Cawayan plant in Sorsogon.

There others Japanese firms had formed up interest in joining the Geothermal 1 bidding round.

The auction for 30 of the most lucrative geothermal areas in the country is scheduled by the Department of Energy will be held next month.

Technology and governance

COMMENTARY

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

DURING a weekly meeting of the Management Association of the Philippines Business Development Agribusiness and Countryside Development (ABCD) Foundation headed by Doctor A. Quisumbing, the issue of technology transfer to farmers came up.

A major reason given for the lack of technology transfer is that the 17,000 agricultural extension workers originally with the Department of Agriculture (DA) were devolved to the provincial and municipal governments. Because of this, the extension workers either do not get new agricultural technologies or the proper direction. This is especially true when the provinces or towns have little appreciation for agriculture.

During this meeting, Gerry Ablaza was the guest speaker. Ablaza is an essential oil specialist, a director of the Organic Producers Trade Association (Opta) and the municipal administrator of Buenavista, Bohol. He talked of how organic farming technology transfer was when government was in charge.

Pest aside, eat pesticide

Ablaza stated that, using organic farming, we can eat pests and still not suffer any ill effects. He cited the case of termites. We usually call the termite exterminator to spray our houses with the appropriate anti-termite chemicals. But if we had chickens roaming free in our backyards, we would not have invaded those chemicals. This is because the chickens would have branched eaten the termites.

At the field level, organic agriculture can offer natural solutions to replace the now commonly used chemical based pesticides. Insects are semi-divine. If an agricultural field is planted in synergic fashion with grass, bushes or trees that emit an atomic equivalent to the insect, they will stay away from that field. There would be no need to pesticides.

An example is the kalding: This is also called sagi-bahpa or sagi-ano in the Tagalog region. Sagi of the Tagalog word for attendant behavior. It is an applicable to insects as it is to-behave and ano. In the Waray-a, this is known as bahi-bahi. The terms define the message.

Another example is the use of bio-diversity and ecological balance. To get rid of snails that destroy a crop, ducks are let free chemically based molluscicide are recommended. The ducks will eat the snails. In addition, their droppings will contribute organic fertilizer and their eggs will provide additional nutritious or extra income.

Talking of fertilizers, do you know why the farmers from the Batanes Islands have big, male bees? Ablaza said a wise because, instead of using chemical fertilizers, they use these bees to stamp on the fruit trees to pollinate. This serves as their organic fertilizer for the next crop.

Technology thrust

Having previously acted as vice president of Mayor Robes has extensive knowledge of his community's lack of job opportunities. If you had gone to Mayor Robes' office, you would have noticed three chairs installed in one, having made agricultural machines. The encouraging of farmers and inputs rendered. The most much has been done. In addition, the rising cost of imported chemical inputs made farming simply unaffordable because of the depreciation of the peso.

Organic agriculture offered the opportunity of reinvigorating the land. It could also decrease the cost of inputs. Finally, since organic products command a higher price in the market, this would result in a profitable venture.

Mayor Robes convinced the municipal council to pass a resolution identifying Bohol as an organic farm. He is completing a tripartite agreement with the University of Asia Western and the Organic Producers Trade Association. They will help provide the research, technology, training and market links necessary to make Bunsa a model organic farming community. He has harnessed the agricultural extension workers to focus on this objective, rather than be distracted by misguided political priorities that occur today in municipalities.

Mayor Robes is leveraging the largely inoperative Municipal Agriculture and Fisheries Council (MAFC), which is the current status of the majority of MAFC's today. The MAFC is the legally mandated body with private sector involvement, tasked to promote agricultural development. Mayor Robes intends to use the private sector in the technology transfer component of his government. For those interested in the Bunsa model, please write or call Gerry Ablaza at 892-2702.

System of rice intensification (SRI)

Mayor Robes is not alone in using governance to promote agricultural technology transfer. Governor Erlito Mercado of Bohol has 24 towns in Bohol promoting SRI, which also focuses on organic approach. He will do this technology transfer through his devolved extension workers under the leadership of agriculturist Lito Quiring and agriculturalist Eufrio Mahinay.

Those officials have recognized the value of SRI technology. In several countries, SRI has consistently shown an increased yield per hectare. Philippines—from 3 to 6 tons; Sri Lanka—2.5 to 5.5; Cambodia—2.7 to 4.6; Bangladesh—4.9 to 6.3 and Indonesia—3.4 to 7.4. Last April 16, when SRI was described in this same space and SRI Philippine Coordinator Rolando Dacuycuy's phone number was provided, calls from 67 provinces were received. The overwhelming response is one of the reasons behind the SRI national convention in UPLB next week from Oct. 28 to 30. Those interested in this convention's governance and SRI technology visit may call Rolando at 092-9-6093575.

It is only when government includes technology transfer in areas like organic farming and SRI that the technology talk will be translated into profitable action. If it is not up to the government and buyers, as well as their counterparts who can motivate them, to take the next step.

(The author is chair of Agrinetwork, a private sector initiative, former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry, and senior chair and Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. Reactions or suggestions, e-mail agrinet@philippinecountry or telefax 02-85-5603.)

Telcos want overseas communications tax removed

By Michelle V. Reyes

TELECOMMUNICATIONS companies are pushing for the removal of the 10 percent tax charged on overseas calls, saying it was the result of an administrative hassle.

Telecommunications companies currently pay a 10-percent value-added tax on revenue from local calls, and a 10-percent overseas communications tax on calls originating from overseas calls.

What the industry wanted was to pay VAT on earnings from each local and overseas calls.

Both the DOT and the VAT have a rate of 10 percent, but the VAT provides an input-output mechanism.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) said that companies can deduct the VAT they paid on purchases of services and products from their VAT liabilities.

Salceda ... ding Javier, on planning head of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), said that paying two types of taxes for — VAT and DOT — was difficult for telecommunications companies. She explained that while charges for DOT and VAT were itemized separately in billings to clients, offline receipts do not reflect how much clients paid for DOT and how much for VAT.

The problem starts when a subscriber/client claims input VAT credits earned from his payment of VAT on the telephone line services.

"Administratively, it is quite difficult for telcos to address that, [owing two receipts. Just that telcos file] payments and the other [to the] Bureau [of Internal Revenue (BIR)] had been suggested, but that would not be practical," Zuñiga, speaking for PLDT and other telecommunications companies, said yesterday in a public hearing on telecommunications industry taxation held at the BIR.

The BIR, on the other hand, was cool to the idea, as replacing the DOT with the VAT would result in a lower tax take for the government.

A BIR official also said the government could be questioned for collecting VAT from outgoing calls, because it can be considered as an exported service.

Exports are exempt from VAT.

BEST RURAL BANK

The Social Security System presented the SSS Gintbud ng Bayan Award to Rural Green Bank of Consga, Inc. as First Rural Bank during the SSS Anniversary celebration at the SSS corporate headquarters in Diliman, Quezon City. The Gintbud ng Bayan is an annual award presented to institutions in recognition of their laudable achievements and contributions to the attainment of the SSS mission of elevating the social security protection to Filipino everywhere. This is the third time that Rural Green Bank of Consga, Inc. received this award.

Shown L-R are: SSS President and Chief Executive Officer Corazon dela Paz, Miriam Bay Aniaya-Martin, Joseph Omar O. Aniaya, Green Rank President and Chairman and Chief Justice Hilario Davide.

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NOTICE OF SALE

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 2801 of the Tariff and Customs and Customs Code of the Philippines, as amended, in accordance with CAO 5-92 as implemented by CMO 12-2003 dated 17 March 2003, there will be a PUBLIC AUCTION conducted starting on 27 October 2004 from 2:00 P.M. until terminated at Bldg. 301, Customs Clearance Area, Kalaklan Gate, Port of Subic of the hereunder listed lots. Said lots will be available for viewing on October 25 & 26, 2004. For further inquiry/particulars, please call the Office of the District Collector at Tel. No. (047) 252-0540 or Tel. No. (02) 435-1611 loc. 1000 to 1004, Chief, Auction and Cargo Disposal Unit at Tel. No. (047) 252-4048.

Sale Lot No. 04-061 Consignee: Used Korean Trading A.K. No. 2003-08 *on Entertainment*	101 units (10 karaoke units repl. refer 3 units set) "Left At 10,000.00" Location: Bldg. 301, SBF Compound
Sale Lot No. 04-062 Consignee: GCT Logistics and Trading Corp. S.A.I. No. 2004-08 *on Entertainment*	1,232 units (30 kgs each) white repl. 4,800 units (30 kgs each) white repl. one (30 units in B.M. condition "Proceeds to be held in Trust" "Left At 10,000.00" Location: Bldg. 213, Agapeon Highway, Subic, MPZ B 444 213 Bldg. 116
Sale Lot No. 04-063 Consignee: GCT Logistics and Trading Corp. S.A.I. No. 2004-07 *on Entertainment*	100 kgs. (30kgs/each) white repl. "Proceeds to be held in Trust" "Left At 10,000.00" Location: Subic Maritime Mark III
Sale Lot No. 04-064 Consignee: GCT Logistics and Trading Corp. S.A.I. No. 2004-06 *on Entertainment*	10 units Power Rotary (Mobiware) (120 pcs units) 175 units Bed Mat (each item) (180 pcs units) 100 units Bed Mat Cap (50 pcs units) 100 units Bilateral Cassette Cover (50 pcs units) 2 units Cassette Set w Cover (10 units) 40 units Photo Holder (180 pcs units) Made in China "Left At 10,000.00" Location: Bldg 116 Cl.A. Bldg. No. 0002
Sale Lot No. 04-065 Unclaimed *on Entertainment*	1000 Plastic Bi-Sectional Shaped Cassette" in used condition "Left At 10,000.00" Location: Bldg 116 Cl.A. Bldg. No. 0002

Note: Conditions/information relative to sale:
- Proceed to be held in trust.
- Bldg. 0 MPZ possession/ejectors of sugar based products with 100 allocation for the year 2004 are qualified.
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Auction Liaison

BUSINESS

ADDITIONAL REVENUE DOWN TO P6B FROM P9B

Gov't gives in to tobacco lobby, lowers sin taxes

By Michelle V. Rosca

BECAUSE of the economic team's decision to lower the proposed additional tax rate on cigarettes and alcohol from 30.1 percent to 20 percent, the government will give up over P3 billion in additional revenues a year.

Estimates from the Department of Finance showed that instead of annually collecting P9.6 billion in additional revenues, the government will only stand to collect a little over P6 billion, with the 20 percent increase in the excise tax rates on the so-called sin products.

The economic team—which includes the Department of Finance, the National Economic and Development Authority, the Department of Trade and Industry and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas—originally pushed for a 30.1 percent increase in the excise on cigarettes and alcohol. The 30.1 percent reflects the amount of inflation from 1997 to 2003, considering that the taxes currently imposed on sin products are still based on 1997 prices.

But pressure from the cigarette makers had forced Congress to ask the economic team to reduce the proposed 30.1 percent tax increase.

"What we propose, Congress disposes," said Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong in a press briefing. "There was a consensus among legislators to lower the additional tax rate to only 20 percent. Most of them feel that 30.1 percent was too high."

DOF sources said President Macapagal-Arroyo suggested to the members of her economic team to heed the legislators' request to prevent delays in the passage of the administration's proposed revenue-enhancement measures.

The Arroyo administration has been warned that the country is facing a credit-rating downgrade if it fails to implement some of its fiscal reform measures before the end of the year.

"Listen (to the wisdom of Congress)," said a finance official quoting President Arroyo as saying during a meeting with economic managers.

At present, tobacco firms pay P1.12 for each pack of low-priced cigarettes, P5.60 for each pack of cigarettes under the medium category, P8.96 for each pack of high priced cigarettes, and P11.48 for each pack of premium cigarettes.

Under the economic team's proposal, the tax rates will also be indexed to inflation every two years.

The proposal to inflate the tax on sin products is included in the Arroyo administration's revenue-enhancement measures intended to help achieve the government's medium-term goal of wiping out the gaping budget deficit, which is expected to reach P197.8 billion by year's end.

BSP: No changes in key rates

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board yesterday voted to keep key policy rates at the present levels as threats to inflation and foreign exchange rates were seen to be manageable.

But Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura, in a press briefing after the MB's monthly interest rate meeting, said monetary authorities would not hesitate to tighten the rates to counter inflationary pressures in the future.

He cited yesterday the overnight borrowing or reverse repurchase rate was kept at 6.75 percent and the overnight lending or repurchase rate at 9 percent.

"In its assessment of the monetary stance, the MB noted that conditions for output and inflation over the policy horizon continue to support the case for maintaining the BSP's policy rates at their current levels," Buenaventura said.

He explained that indications of price pressures across various commodity groups were outweighed by the presence of relatively high unemployment and moderate credit activity in the economy. The board also believed that there are more people who are not earning wages, there is less consumer demand.

"Such conditions imply that the current inflation appeared is originating mainly from the supply side rather than the demand side," he said.

In the absence of clear evidence of demand-side effects of supply shocks or mounting demand-side inflationary pressures, the current rate easing monetary authorities thus opted to maintain the present settings for monetary policy.

The current rates were pegged in July 2003.

"Given the dominant role of supply-side developments in the inflation outlook, inflation can be best mitigated in the near term by appropriate supply-side or non-monetary policy measures that would facilitate production, timely importation, distribution and delivery of key commodities," Buenaventura said.

He also noted that the prevailing interest rate differentials between Philippine 91-day Treasury bill rate and the comparative US T-bill rate as well as the 90-day London Interbank Offered Rate was still "sizeable" at more than 600 basis points.

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LIFESTYL

ESTHETICA by Pia Amanio of Salon de Manil

That fresh-out-of-bed glam look

Playful, colorful and extremely cool hair products that are a status symbol have hit town

Text by Chuche V. Moral
Photos by Jin-Goho Pan-alan

IF namedropping were a crime, the people behind Tigi Bed Head would be on their way to the gallows.

In a press statement, they mention the celebrities from Britney to Beyoncé among Bed Head avid users. The album's Hello Henry, Sarah Jessica Parker, Charlize Theron, Paris Hilton, Jessica Timberlake, Enrique Iglesias, Ben Affleck, Lenny Kravitz—heck—even Like Mindanao! And how about Meg Ryan, Sharon Stone, Renee Meloppez, the weekly Debutantes, the authors of Cookying Unsophisticated, No Doubt, Foo Fighters?

Why all these celebrities?

It is because the Bed Head haircare and styling range is sort of a status symbol, actually to use stylist. Much as A-list clientele makes it a cut above designers and supermodel-bought styling brands. And of course, the price point does that, too.

Only in salons

In the Philippines, Bed Head is available in 28 of Metro Manila's top salons.

"Each of the products requires advice from professional hairdressers, that's why Bed Head is available only in salons," explains Anita Lucas of Hairindustry Inc., Philippine distributor of the Tatas, USA-based brand. "The hairdresser has to 'educate' clients on the specific use of each product to achieve a particular look.

TIMES 12

GLOBAL Eclectic by Danny Kanalbas of Emphasis Salon

ORIENTALIA by Kanzi Tam of Picasso Salon

ATHLETICA by David Charlton of David's

URBAN Species by Cherry Reyes of Esencia's Yoni & Guy

BED HEADS. From top left: Ebony Kaleihau (Empleos) interprets Bohemian by Cherry Reyes (Esencia's Yoni & Guy) with Urban Species; David Charlton with Adrienne; and Orris Zubiaga (Plandrit) with Metropolitan. From left: Stefan Wilczynski (Basement) with Rock 'n' Roll Royalty; Pin Jarvinia (Salon de Manila) with Alchemia; and Raoul Tan (Picasso) with Orientalia

That fresh-out-of-bed glam look

Turn to page C3

METROPOLITAN by Orris Zubiaga of Plandrit Salon

ROCK 'n' Roll Royalty by Stefan Wilczynski of Basement Salon

Out gals and styling aficionados different innovators and creators."

The Bed Head range was actually developed "by a hairdresser for hairdressers," says Orris Zubiaga, creative director of the Plandrit salon chain. She is referring to celebrity hairdresser Antony Maneja, who first sprouted Bed Head's most popular product, the Bed Head Stick, in 1988.

Very colorful and attractively packaged, Bed Head bottles and jars have become key in the design of Plandrit's Studio Salons, where Zubiaga is principal stylist.

"It's like going to a doctor, you need a prescription for a specific condition," Zubiaga explains. She adds that with proper coaching from your stylist, the products are actually easy to use.

"Even the best haircut in the world still takes a little bit of work to have it looking really great," notes David Charlton of David's Salon in a statement. "As a hairdresser, it makes it easy for me to pass this on to my clients because I know I'm giving them a great product. It looks good and has great results. It just makes my job so much easier."

Style possibilities

For stylists who like to play around shapes and textures, like Pin Jarvinia of Salon de Manila, Bed Head is key in helping them explore the cut. "It enhances my craft. It's glamorous, versatile, playful.

"It brings out the best in my haircut," asserts Cherry Reyes of Esencia's Yoni & Guy and names Head Rush, Impression Hard to Get, Shamptastic and Manipulator amongher favorites.

In the past three years that the hair care and styling line has been in the country, it has already earned a following, largely through the advice of hairdressers. Bed Head comes with a warning that says "you must have a sense of humor" to use their products. And Antonio Charlton, Jones and Zubiaga were among the seven stylists who lent their "sense of humor" at the recent relaunch of Bed Head at the Makati Shangri-La hotel.

The stylists demonstrated the style possibilities with Bed Head—from the simply playful to the grossly-defying and downright cute. Rounding out the range were funny fusillino of lingerie, Salon Kenzi Tans of Women Salon and Stefan Wilczynski of Basement Salon.

"It's a fun range," Lauren says. "Our entire menu of hair products are geared toward a stylized look without looking fixed." For the style-shy who just wants healthier hair, "we have shampoos and conditioners for specific hair types and needs," she adds.

Bed Head products cost from P750 for the shampoos and conditioners, and up to P1,350 for the styling aids.

AURORA Facelift.

AURORA crossed hand before (top) and after (above).

POLARIS Major version on lips

Non-surgical alternatives to facelifts

THE Canadian plastic surgeon Dr. Stephen Mulholland says an epidemic that has spread among American women is beginning to afflict the rest of the world.

"Women no longer want to have face lifts; they just want the results without the inconvenience of downtime and surgery," he said.

Mulholland was in the country recently to introduce two new gadgets. The Aurora and Polaris machines are radio frequency (RF) to smooth fine lines and firm up sagging skin in several brief sessions in 3-4 weeks apart.

MAKEOVER 911

Kirsty Sadasi

No proof of the 'crime'

Procedures using the machines will not show any signs of treatment on the skin's surface, except for redness that fades in an hour or less even in people with sensitive skin. So you walk in and out and continue with your routine with people none the wiser.

The Aurora (introduced in the mind between IPL (intense pulsed light) and RF, it has two versions, Aurora Major is used in the removal of pigmentation/discolorations such as melasma, freckles, age spots, acne marks, spider veins, redness from rosacea and couperose. It is also known to shrink pore size and has a spicy enzyme combination also by controlling oil that greasy areas while stimulating collagen and moisture on dry aging areas.

On the other hand, Aurora Minor firms up the skin and smoothens wrinkles. It can only correct fine to moderate wrinkles.

Painless

The Aurora uses low electricity so there is little pain, making anesthesia unnecessary for most patients. By itself, it is appropriate for women who have no time. The end are starting to notice some mild sagging and fine lines.

Asian skin, which tends to suffer from discoloration and scar damage, will also benefit from the procedure.

At 34, this is for me as it addresses my skin concerns, and I only have to retain every four weeks for rejuvenation and maintenance.

The Orbit is a thin micro-ferrous conducted RF and laser light energy. The Major version is for firming up the skin and smoothing out moderate to deep wrinkles, providing greater wrinkle reduction. The Minor version addresses mild to moderate skin discolorations.

Using high electricity, it can hurt so anesthesia is a must.

Dr. Regina Llorin, my dermatologist from the Belo Medical group, suggests an hour of topical anesthesia for those with a low pain threshold. Of course, with very bad sagging jowls and severe loose skin, nothing beats the classic facelift.

Problems from menopause

Ten subjects, Tisha, a 48 year-old domestic goddess, has had a problem with pigmentation outbreak from the time she hit her 30s due to menopause. When she was in her late 30s, she noticed the sudden sagging of her jawline and cheeks despite staying away from the sun and following a strict skin care regimen.

Based on Dr. Mulholland's lecture, she has to have a two-step combination treatment of the Aurora for her pigmentation and the Polaris for her sagging skin and deep lines. She who has a low tolerance for pain and most of the lines are around her eyes and lips.

The anesthesia was in effect for an hour. She did not complain of any pain during the Aurora and for most areas during the Polaris, a stinging feeling around the lips, where her lines were deepest due to smoking, was tolerable.

Tisha says she will return because the procedure is done only once a month, and she has noticed an improvement after the first session—the lightening of her pigmentation and the firmness of her cheeks.

Overall, her skin texture is smoother and softer to the touch. The recommended sessions for her are six in eight every three to five weeks. If there is a special occasion, she goes for the Contraception Lift 6 gadget between treatments for that painless boost for her facial muscles.

Aurora can be sufficient for those who are 45 and under with good skin quality since Polaris is always best when preceded by IPL or Aurora to even out the skin tone. What is the use of firm skin when you have blotches and stains all over the face? People always notice the discoloration first.

For inquiries regarding the Aurora and Polaris, call 4452000. Both machines are available at Belo Medical Center, Bonifacio Global City.

Do-it-yourself hair coloring

IF you are embarrassed by your gray hair, you can now hide them yourself with age-defying colorants from Bellady Decorel by Wella.

Natural shades from light brown to black penetrate each strand evenly covering even the most resistant grays from roots to tips for an attractive and lasting color full of shine.

Bellady Decorel entails a simple, three-step process for convenient home application—you can color, tone and condition in less than one hour.

The product boasts of a "color and care" system for optimum coloration without damaging effects. It also offers an improved conditioner that combines the nourishing properties of Almond Extracts, B-Panthenol and Vitamin E to keep hair smooth and healthy while enhancing shine.

Bellady Decorel by Wella is available in leading department stores, health and beauty shops, drugstores and salon/esthetic institutes/aids.

It is exclusively distributed by Procter Marketing Corp., tel. 8989783.

CAN'T wait to sit down for dinner. Nancy and TV's hostess Louie Yanson (center) are here Andy Soriano, Jovely Duarte Mendiola, Tourism Undersecretary Jose Clemente and international pole player Migz Zubiri

ALL set for the Thai dinner. Ramon Jovanny Morales Hernandez Soriano, gorgeous Carol Garcia and media business management IC Bongco

New chef on the block

ALL in the family. Patrizzia of the city's hostess Cayanga with daughter-in-law Lizette Ramon Cayanga

HOT hubbies Alex Tingo and Jojo Orejudos

EYE-CATCHING sisters-in-law Maria Dessa Uy and Lisa Uy

HOT, hot stars shaking our town: Philippine's heavyweight champ Edward Castro, Kit Vergara, Mara Benavidez and Sally Martinez

SAY it with cheese and wine. Sheila gals Jojo Ocampo, Carmela Orejudos, Bea Go and Joanne Ramirez

HUGS. Prima with Maria Concepcion, Holy Concepcion Hechanova, Hilarion and Nanda Pimentel

WHENEVER long at the eighth(!) Lenten Tuesday (even especially one prepared by famous—in Hong Kong, that is—restaurateur Cecille Huang, you definitely must go, darlings).

Well, a couple of days ago, Louie did just that. Cecille had just jetted back from Bangkok where she goes in every now and then to take up various cooking courses. After all, Cecille is a top graduate of her alma mater, the renowned Pimlico Thai Cooking School.

There was a group of us invited by Cecille's Thai chums held at the home of Sofianne Soriano. Andy Soriano. Strong words and a blackout made Louie cancel the dinner in his home, but Andy's abode made for a fine substitute.

Bringing the ingredients here and from Bangkok, Cecille did the kitchen and went on a call preparing an excellent authentic Thai dinner. Dig this menu: For appetizer, it was Miang Phuan, consisting of palm sugar, ginger and grated coconut in pepper leaves.

The soup was Tom Yum Goong, a Thai hot and sour prawn soup. For the salad, it was Som Tum, a sweet green papaya salad. Then the first three kinds of to-die-for entrées: Sweet Basil Phat Gai, which is ground chicken curry; Phat Khing Phuan, beef curry in sweet peanut sauce and Goong Phrik Pao Dang, red sauté duck curry.

Needless to say, pathetic, the chance neither went gaga over all the curries, and finally, the Phad Thai. This fried noodles and basil Thai style rice. Most of us also went on the aforementioned Fourth Bowls Rice chaser to cut the window for that night, darlings.

Everyone was saying Cecille "Sper, your curry restaurant soon!" While a smile she said "Hopefully soon, but not before I take up my professional master cooking class in mid-October with a master chef in a one-star restaurant in Bangkok."

Cecille then told me of the plans to introduce herself on a private party chef on Ambient Thai food when she returns from her intensive training in Thailand. In fact, she already has several booking for December!

So, people, get ready to meet this to-die-for new chef on the block. I'll definitely be one of those online.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arnache

Photos by Alex Van Haeren on Kodak Max

Pitoy Moreno's soulful style

When Pitoy calls, paleyuges, we all come running. And that's exactly what happened when Andy's request of fashion could no endeavor sarak persons of his two-day fashion extravaganza at the CCP on this 26 and 27 (can't wait to see it).

Joining hands together for this fashion and fund-raising celebration are some of Manila's most beautiful and this style icons—men, respected philanthropists, the coolest designers who love wildly Philippine chic and support art of the Louis Vuitton Pomellato and Bvlgari Bulgari. And even our business magnate Jessy Cojuangco, no less.

Leading the pack were glamorous patrons of the arts Imelda de Cojuangco, co-author and Tingling Cojuangco, lady with a heart of gold Pinky Gotesco and young woman of substance, Marivic Ocampo Concepcion.

The glam-studded lobby of the spectacular Cuer McKinley Place was beautifully dressed up for the occasion, paleyuges, and a yummy buffet was prepared by La Tasca, true to its class!

Famed Bulagan interventional director Tanny Bulaong, his foundation's drive to create 750,000 homes in the next seven years. And General Bulagan volunteer Didier Wible, who spoke a Chat, cracked our hearty salary he declared himself on his Philippines.

Jessy C. expressed strongly the importance of providing support and love to abused street children. A real reality but "with the help and care of the privileged, the reality can be turned around for the positive," he said.

The big moment was the 30-minute fashion presentation by Pitoy and, for a flash of style, some songs by Gerry Lazard. The gowns shown were timeless and elegant creations, as only Pitoy's fashion Czar could pull off. Pitoy took his bows and thunderous applause.

It was truly an evening of fashion and compassion, and as exciting preview of the events to be raised fund-raising Marivic of the Women Authority Themes, CCP on Oct. 26 and 27. For tickets, call 8819900.

CECILE Chang Fernandez whips up some of the best Thai food this side of town.

WOMEN behind the FCCP Annual Ball. Countdown 25th anniversary-editor of the silver anniversary souvenir program Olga Severino Martial, director of ways and means Annie Ramos, committee Fortunato Ledesma, FCCP president Melito Abdon, chair Nene Lozano, vice chair Carrie Bautista, founding members Fanny Bunoz and Mel Layug and Gina Eulau, souvenir program chair

INTERCON'S Portuguese chef, Luis Miguel Marques Guerra

Heady blend of cultures

To dine on Portuguese cuisine is to taste the presence of other countries, other cultures. You'll imagine images of the vast empire that once stretched from Brazil in South America to Angola and Mozambique in Africa and even Goa in India. In a manner of speaking, paleyuges, each of these countries helped stir the pot.

Portuguese cooking can now be savored at the cool Café Joaquin of the InterContinental Hotel. Recently, we got acquainted with fantastic gastronomic delights when we dug into the event's wide selection of buffet specials, all exclusively whipped up by talented guest chef, d paujis, Luis Miguel Marques Caseiro, who joined us from Portugal.

Check out these treats, darlings, which we all agreed were top in our long list. Appetizers: Codfish Pie (Bolo de bacalhau); Cod salad with chickpeas; Clam with Portuguese smoked sausage (Amejoas com chouriço); Roast Portuguese sausage (Chouriço assado); and Bread bean stew with spicy smoked sausage.

Soups: "Mozzarelenses" soup and Charneiro soup, lemon relished. Duck with rice, Braga style, Steak Portuguese style; Roast pork with cumin gravies; and Braised lamb deliciously cooked Lisbon style.

Yummy desserts: Custard tartlets; lemon chestnuts pudding, which I could swear tasted like mom's plain, sponge cake from Alabang; "Padres de Deus" from a recipe by the monks of the Convent of Arrabida; and Cottage cheese mousse—this one was my favorite.

Plus excellent Portuguese wines to devour all, of course!

Today, Oct. 22, is your last chance to check out this gastronomic festival, paleyuges. Menu, discounts, promos. Be call 8159771 local 361.

FCCP silver anniversary

It's a go for the 25th anniversary celebrations of the Friends for Cultural Concerns of the Philippines (FCCP), which is holding a ball tomorrow at the grand ballroom of Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Among the event's beneficiaries are the Philippine High School for the Arts based in Makiling, Laguna; Ballet Philippines; Ballet Manila; Kaisahan Sociedad for Arts and Culture; Symphony of the East Fine Arts Society; Students Organ Association; Cebu Youth Orchestra, paleyuges.

Such celebrants as 25th anniversary's the FCCP renews its commitment to the development of art and culture and pledges to continue its work with greater dynamism in the forthcoming years," said celebrate Nene Lozano.

Okay gals, get your dancing shoes ready!

THREE stars all in for night: counselor of the hour Pitoy Moreno, charity co-event honoree Marissa Orosa C. and her husband, mega business magnate and realtor Jose Concepcion

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2004 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

Your waistline defines your generation

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

TELL me where your waistline is and I'll tell you what generation you belong to—Boo Y, Gen X, yuppie, baby boomer or even beyond. It's what stage of South Beach diet you're in.)

Wrapping up the 2005 Paris millennium last week, Women's Wear Daily (WWD) wrote an interesting observation about the times: "Waistlines have replaced hemlines as the great divider of generations... Young consumers wanted an **low-rise jeans are high sensitivities as the epitome** of nonlinear..."

It continued to say that men and women—consumers in general, especially those 30 and above—are highly divided in their choices, whether low- or high-rise, and jeans designers and manufacturers are trying to decipher the market's preferences and combat **issues.**

From the '50s onward, hemlines were the **consuming issue**, with the fashion collections acting them as the defining design statement of each fashion season, whether it was mini or maxi coat, mid-calf, knee-length or midi. The fall and rise of the hemline were even correlated to the economic index through the decades.

However, apparently, today, hemline has become a non-issue. Unless you wear your skirt micro-mini short, people hardly notice how low or high you wear your skirt. It's been accepted and obvious for quite some time now **that women have choices when it comes to** hemlines, and that there's no longer a uniform **length. You can go knee-length today, mid-calf** tomorrow, or if you're adventurous enough, like Lulu Tan-Gan, wear it mid-thigh. The main holds true for pants—capri, baggy-or-boot-legged-long or pedal-pusher short. (Baggy trousers, by the way, are the thing again.)

Waistlines, however, are the fashion flashpoint to watch. Since Tom Ford declared that the hips were the new erogenous zone and proceeded to pull down to the hips women's skirts and pants, navel-flashing has become the vogue, for both guys and girls.

For instance, many fashion seasons ago, when I bought pants for my two gentleman sons, I'd always get a jolt telling the salesperson that I'm looking for a size 34-36, as my boys have directed me to go—indicating not **their waist but their hips. There was even a** time when my eldest son wore his pants way way down to the hips, at sit, so that honestly I never knew how he managed to keep it up, even with/or belt.

Low-rise is in the look today what mini was to ours. It has defined today's generation. And **it's not going away, not even after this year's** collections brought the pants back up to the waist. The natural-waist look prevailed in the collections in New York, Milan and Paris this spring. However, fashion and trade experts interviewed by WWD said they doubt if the high-waist or natural-waist look would go mainstream this year. The market, they say, is locked-in over the fun-pumelling crowd, still wants its pants or swaddle the hips, more than the waist.

Such consumer behavior has left the pants **manufacturers with no choice but to offer up** close to the consumer. Interestingly, pants lines are offering as many as four "rises"—the low, the medium-high, the high-to the natural waist or from the belly button to 10 inches below.

This is quite interesting, for never in contemporary fashion have we been measuring the distance to—and from the belly button—in inches. According to WWD, the pants makers simply want to watch the entire market segment, from the so-called "hip dudes" to the "soccer moms." And more often than not, the **savvy moms want to be hip themselves.**

This proves what we've been saying all along—the best way to define the market, especially the style in fashion market, is by its lifestyle, not so much by its biological age. This **is because nothing lasts today's women and** men from trying out styles; they can go as far as their courage—or cowardice—will take them.

A Florence (Italy) retailer divides the waistline into three options—classic, medium (mid-rise) and contemporary. She told WWD: "In the past year, consumers have been totally confused, asking us where their waistline is. We're figuring it out for them before they go to the dressing room."

WWD tags this the "Great Waist Debate." "It **leaves retailers asking you're on, just give your belly** button a long hard look, and ask yourself, is it the right business to be?

2,000-strong audience for Pinoy

Last Monday, Pinoy Rhoemis had just come from a lunch hosted by Imelda Cojuangco (**who, by the way still hasn't read that story**) for Ilea Dolled and Marcy Reason, and sighed to us over the phone..."Pagod na pagod na ako."

He could have looked so. Pinoy is tiresome to humour. He's a few days away from his two-night show at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (Oct. 26 and 27), which is both a tribute to Pinoy and fundraiser for CCP which, you must admit, is showing wear and tear, quite literally.

Ms Cojuangco chairs the first night, and the **trio of Tingting Cojuangco, Ricky Cuneta and** Mariana Concepcion takes over the second night. Both nights are expecting a crowd of 1,000 each, with tickets going for P4,000 and P5,000 a piece.

Nobody sells tickets to fashion shows anymore; it's **that hard to come by each, but not Pinoy and his vast** network. They are selling tickets to his shows to mere friends. They're going beyond corporate sponsorship, which is how today's shows are financed.

Pinoy is hands-on with the production, with **Floy Quintos directing; yes he hall-complains** and half-declares that he's tired.

For somebody who's tired, he indeed has his schedule full the rest of the year. After CCP he has a show of Philippine costumes for the **royal alumni reunion at Shangri-La, and on** Nov. 26, he's helping bosom friend, Dr. Greg Abrior, by mounting another benefit show for Philippine General Hospital.

Talking about what it takes to stage a show **three days, he says, "I don't have that kind of** money. Negotiations na 'ko." he's not credible.

Time was when hemlines were the issue. Now it's whether you're low rise or high-rise

Classic with a twist

AUDREY Hepburn and Jackie O. always wore their LBDs in a classic manner, more often than not matched with pearls and 2-inch/5cm-heeled shoes. To add a bit of spice, wear yours with a brightly colored bag, eye-catching bag charms and multi-colored shoes. Perfect bag and patterned stiletto-heeled slingbacks from Lily Almario in Glorietta 4 and Power Plant Mall; bag charms from the Silver Star, opening on Nov. 1 Ilac Glorietta 3 or to order from Eleanor, 0911-5366344

Ethnic flair

CREATE a bit of mystery and drama by matching your LBD with exotic, ethnic accessories. A pair of Mirrazo shoes from Pakistan can help establish the look. Finish off with exotic dangling earrings or a multi-strand copper-colored cuff and a richly hued shawl. Shoes from Elizabeth Hulle Vy; vintage earrings from India; multi-strand cuff from Mimi Cosmetics in Power Plant Mall; shawl from Lily Almario

All hail the little black dress

'You can wear black at any time. You can wear it at any age. You may wear it on almost any occasion. A little black frock is essential to a woman's wardrobe'
–Christian Dior

APPLES' PICKINGS

Apples Aburto-Sudhoraus

THE LITTLE black dress is perhaps the most versatile article of clothing ever. Not only is it flattering and practical, it is also elegant and reliably chic. You can evoke any mood, blend into a crowd or make a statement with it—with help, of course, from your choice of accessories.

Maximize the use of your LBD by using various accessories to colour it up or down, set the mood or achieve a particular look. The possibilities are endless, but pinpoint your creativity with these examples.

E-mail the author at apsaburto@pdi.com.ph

THE LITTLE black dress is versatile and easy to dress up or down. Dress it up with pearls and your favorite bag. LBD is to order from Elizabeth Hulle Vy, call 0905-3028351, 0908881 or 0917-5662251

Chinoiserie

GO home! LBD is more casual affairs, even on the weekends. Match it with colorful brocade espadrilles and vibrant sunglasses for a more dressed-down but still fashionable appearance. A large-beaded tote would be the perfect match for these multi-hued accessories. Headpiece with jade pendant and espadrilles from Lily in Glorietta 4 and Power Plant Mall; choker of assorted stones with multi-strand silk cords from Salsa in Power Plant Mall; cuffs and leather tote from Mimi Cosmetics

Corporate chic

THE LBD can look professional when matched with a chic jacket, pumps and a structured handbag. Mixed in a rosy powerful color and can in fact communicate confidence, ability and competence in the workplace. Jacket and bag from Tyler in Glorietta 4, Power Plant Mall and Rustan's Tower; bracelet/chain Mimi Cosmetics; shoes from Salsa

Evening glam

THE LBD is sexy, dramatic and perfect for your evening affairs. You can play the bombshell by matching it with sky-high stilettos, heavy makeup and a strong, musky fragrance. Or you can opt to play demure and lady-like by matching your LBD with satin kitten-heel mules, a feminine purse, a pretty yet affordable necklace and a delicate shawl. Mules, purse and shawl from Lily Almario; silver necklace with pearls from the Silver Star

The Young Designers Guild pushes the envelope by presenting clothes inspired by cutting-edge European videos

Filmy fashion

Text by Alec F. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

THE LINE between fashion and video was again blurred as 12 members of the Young Designers Guild recently presented clothes inspired by sounds and images culled from cutting-edge videos made by some of Europe's leading avant-garde fashion designers and filmmakers.

Presented by Alliance Française de Manille and directed by Bobby Carcasona, "Techno Moments... Fashion Videos" redefined the use of catwalk, as people behind the show converted the Greenhills Expo Exchange into the fashion-equivalent of a boxing ring.

In lieu of ropes, however, the show featured a revolving platform, where models converged after emerging either from the audience or from both sides of the stage. Guests were thus able to get a better view of the clothes—front, back and center—as models exited each segment by rounding on the moveable ramp.

A series of video presentations produced by designers Martin Margiela, Gilles Rosier, Bernhard Willhelm and Aitaki Loh, filmmakers Stefan Nikolaevic and Marcus Tomlinson, and photographer Ellen Von Unwerth were shown on the giant theater screen behind the catwalk and, further than usual, gave a particular theme, organizers gave the designers a chance to view all the videos and choose a particular clip which they felt featured images and music that best reflected their style or would inspire them the most.

French and clubby feel

Except for Suzi Angel Jacob's homemade film which meant literally pleasant non-sense then would have given her quite enough French flavor), almost everything about the presentation was fresh and had a clubby feel to it. Despite all the gimmicks, however, many designers were able to build their own by scoring up with interesting yet wearable pieces.

Thus a few notably James Reyes, Amy Serrano, Yvonne Quirozmbing and Michiki Asano, favored the young, unblushed look. Riel Vergel de Dios drew inspiration from the 1980s, while Ariel Bautista tried to redefine club wear by venturing into the glamorous world of rock stars.

"The look has gotten richer," says Bautista, who used brocade and Thai silk and mounted them with tulle and chiffon. "No traces of club wear are still there."

Reyes' clothes seemed deceptively simple, as they were composed of blank shift dresses made of stretch cotton twill. But he had to think of ways to differentiate one from the other and give them shape. He did this by sewing various patches of beige woven paper on the dresses.

"Like Martin Margiela," he says, "I paid homage to the construction. The beige fabric is supposed to be brown paper on a black table cloth."

Reyes then stitched said pattern in place with orange thread, which, he says, stands for the ubiquitous orange-colored tailor's chalk. Over the styling are loaded with visual humor, as tape measures and numerous shapes pinwheels dotted as necklaces.

Asano redefined his penchant for minimum and materials dressing by incorporating sleepwear into his oatmeal-colored dresses and tulle made of silk and linen. He demonstrated a number of jackets and vests, and embellished corsets and halter dresses with pin tucks and pleats.

"Everything was inspired by the video," he says, referring to the clip produced by Yohji Yamamoto featuring designs by Chan Asano. "But it is the first time, though, that I've infused it to the futuristic cuts my collection. Some of my models were wearing chemises, long jabos and tank tops underneath."

Asano, who produced a series of bronze, organic-like pieces made of stretch satin, also drew inspiration from Marjetta. The designer, who seemed to have appropriated dress creation as his middle name, came up with a wonderful collection for the brave and daring.

Asano's most dramatic featured the designer's trademark geometric dress and exaggerated pleating. This time, though, he opened the pleats a bit and did reverse versions in various directions.

One of the collection's featured pieces, a high-cropped number, was achieved through the painstaking process of hand stitching and boning. Asano's ability to use both sides of the fabric imbues his clothes with reining lines and textures.

"It seems as if I used several fabrics," he says, "but in truth, I only used one."

Over the top

Vergel de Dios went over the top by combining structure and draping. He visually accessorizing collection of tops and skirts made of Thai silk and mounted with black tulle bathed back to the 1980s, when power dressing was marked by broad shoulders and bold color combinations.

Apart from subverting the clothes, the tassels of ruffles and harlequin collars added a sense of urbanity to the collection, thighly playful like shoulder pads gave way to a slimmer version to add an illusion of drape to the clothes.

"The extended shoulders," he says, "are actually part of the sleeves. I draped the fabric and made it part of the sleeve to achieve softness."

Quizzing describes his collection as tropical rocks, and rightly so since the cord strips of edged pile and scrubbed them with such energy maybe as rude, ly-

Filmy fashion

Continued from P1

cut and leather jackets, the gamut some of which she paired with pants and skirts, studded sunglasses and heels to form a typical Hollywood Diva-lesque clothes sense in Bridesmaids' video.

"I think and edgy pale wraps and studs clothes out of them," she says. "The look is absolutely young and sexy."

While various designers couldn't seem to stop shows their resistance to accept a grunge and denim's re-take up the look of westerns, two names stood out from the rest for creating a new wave in Indian fashion that underneath their trademark styles.

Starting collection, as contemporaries (and former rivals) Deepak Lamba and Anju Modi, by the two of the best fit-gates designers of their generation. In the role of standing outfits, the eight models have been inspired by many various their participation, in all can element as he glued on their respective collections.

Lamba played with silk chiffon in various shades of green, and as "for the former color that season. He designed and layered the fabric that will be dressed the model bodies, before accompanying a number of gowns with tassels embroidery for visual drama.

"I was inspired by the western music," he says, "and not the cowboy clothes, which were so vogue. That's why I used lots of chiffon to emulate the feeling of lightness. I opted for something ever-able in view of the grim (shade) terrain."

More difficult clothes

On the one, Modi made the more difficult clothes, fashioned from two-toned chiffon in warm gold, bronze and copper that were so exactly out of their time compared to his two-toned black-and-white pieces.

A number of gowns were completed with diagonal and vertical strips that began to lose the colour and consistency down the hem. One wonders were [illegible] concerning diagonal strips on the body and knees.

With the strips, Modi also experimented on giving the sartorial leather feel from a stretch look. He didn't do break work just that the fabrics gowns included two types of look of color.

"The fabric [color] was in the cutting and material finishing of each strip," he says. "Each strip is cut on the bias or a combination in the body."

As the case Lamba and Modi have been screaming separately is to wear the word "young" is dropped and they are welcomed simply as fashion designers. But, well, if we're young women to be self-conscious, unpronounceable and long-term, then the tag is just right.

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